

WASHINGTON COLLEGE

International Studies Review





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WASHINGTON COLLEGE
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES REVIEW

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“Lessons from a Naked Man,” by David Snyder, was originally published in *So Far and Yet So Near*, American Citizens Abroad, publishers.

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The *Washington College International Studies Review* is a student journal intended to provide opportunities for undergraduates to publish research articles that contribute to the body of knowledge in international relations and related disciplines, provide fresh insight into the complexities of world affairs, and introduce readers to areas of the world they themselves have not yet explored. The *Washington College International Studies Review* is intended to showcase the research of students of the international disciplines. The journal welcomes writers from all fields of study who have undertaken a project with international concerns at its core, including the areas of politics, economics, literature, art, anthropology, environmental studies, history, and health studies. Washington College students and alumni traveling, working and living abroad are encouraged to submit travelogues for the Notes From Abroad section of the journal.

Electronic submissions and other inquiries should be sent to is_review@washcoll.edu. For submission guidelines, to review past volumes and further information, visit our webpage at <http://ist.washcoll.edu/>.

The International Studies program is an interdisciplinary major that includes faculty from Anthropology, Business, Economics, Foreign Languages, History, and Political Science. In addition to the major, students may choose from five regional concentrations: Africa, East Asia, Latin America, Near East, and Western Europe. The academic program provides students with a strong foundation of theoretical knowledge and practical experience. The curriculum is enhanced with opportunities for internships; study abroad and foreign exchanges; extracurricular activities such as the Model United Nations and Model African Union as well as on-campus programming through the Goldstein Program in Public Affairs, International House and International Studies Council. Our majors have careers and advanced training in teaching, politics, business, journalism, international work, and public service.

Founded in 1782 under the patronage of George Washington, Washington College is a private, independent college of the liberal arts and sciences located in historic Chestertown on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

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Editors' Note

For anyone accustomed to reading and researching in the field of international studies, the idea of our world rapidly shrinking due to globalization has become a familiar one. As our access to the world around us grows, we struggle to face the challenges and realize the advantages of global forces from which we can no longer choose to isolate ourselves. With this in mind, we are proud to bring you this fourth volume of the *Washington College International Studies Review*. The *Review* was created to provide a formal opportunity for undergraduate students to share their research, experiences, and interests. This year we present a wide variety of articles touching on issues that travel not only across borders but through time in order to affect us. The reader will discover how South African nuclear weapons and World War I propaganda, Indian villages and Jamaican economics, and Chinese leaders and Argentine torturers, all present questions which haunt us no matter how far removed we are from them in distance or in time. This volume of the *Review* also continues our “Notes from Abroad” feature, which allows current students and alumni to share personal narratives of international experience. We encourage alumni to continue to contribute their extraordinary stories, and sincerely thank those who submitted to this year’s “Notes from Abroad.”

Of course, a shrinking globe affects more than the topics of our submissions. This year we have continued our policy of accepting submissions from our abroad partners at Rhodes University in South Africa, Lingnan University in Hong Kong, and Royal Holloway College, University of London and University of Hull in the United Kingdom. We hope to be able to publish works from these partners in the near future.

We would like to thank Dr. Tahir Shad, Director of the International Studies program and Curator of the Louis L. Goldstein program in Public Affairs, Dr. Donald McColl, Curator of the Douglass Cater Society of Junior Fellows, and Kevin Coveney, Vice President for Admissions, for their financial support. We would also like to thank Dr. James Sloam at Royal Holloway, University of London, Dr. Paul Harris at Lingnan University, Dr. Thabisi Hoeane at Rhodes University, and Richard Woodward at the University of Hull for their work in promoting the *Review* and for screen-

ing submissions at their institutions. We are also grateful to Diane Landskroener for her excellent production design. Finally, we would like to thank everyone who submitted entries for consideration. Without your willingness and enthusiasm, the *Washington College International Studies Review* would not be possible.

David Hosey, '07, Editor

Brian Taylor, '08, Junior Editor

Kimberly Proctor, '08, Junior Editor

Christine J. Wade, Ph.D., Editor-in-Chief



ARTICLES



Britain, France, and the Propaganda of 1914-1918

BRANDON RIGHI

For most people the Great War is just as definable by physical characteristics as by its lasting political consequences. The clichés are well known to any high school student who is a veteran of the standard few-day unit devoted to the conflict's study: machine-guns, airplanes, gas, submarines, tanks, and so forth. A similar well-known and commonly paraded aspect of the Great War is its history of propaganda use: the same student who recounts the war's inventive use of new technology has also probably seen some of the visual material, be it the pointing Lord Kitchener or a depiction of a demonic "hun."

But to treat propaganda as merely a theatrical aspect of the war would be shortsighted. Indeed, the subject of propaganda's use and effect on societies has garnered unceasing attention from politicians and academia alike since the war's close. Passionate, strongly worded indictments of propaganda have been penned, and twentieth-century governments have utilized propaganda at levels of sophistication and efficiency hardly imagined by the ruling politicians of 1914 who scrambled to set up primitive modes of controlling information and the press. Thus the First World War being recognized as the origin and

defining moment of modern propaganda has important resonances in the modern day, as well as in the study of the conflict itself.

It is certainly difficult, if not impossible, to precisely gauge propaganda's effect on the war's outcome. But the universal association of propaganda along with the other novelties of the Great War certainly displays its importance—if not to outright military victory, then to our sense of proper government action and our conception of an honorable victory. The propagandist activities of the Great War were of endless variety and purpose. It is likely that the largest portions of propaganda efforts were toward the more mundane and less visible realms of information censorship and the dispersal of propaganda to enemy soldiers and populations. Yet it is the more visible and infamous realm of atrocity propaganda that has ensured that World War I propaganda is not remembered as a proud achievement of human ingenuity, but commonly as a regrettable phenomenon of a period of history when cool heads did not prevail, when hatred and ignorant conceptions of the enemy fueled a conflict devoid of moral foundation.

But before the more infamous aspects of this topic are explored, attention needs to be devoted to the propagandist activities conducted during the war, if only to combat the mythical quality Great War propaganda has developed. To be discussed are several aspects of propaganda during World War I: government actions at the commencement of hostilities, including censorship and control of information; the organization and evolution of propaganda bureaucracies; types of propaganda employed and their targets; and finally, appraisals of the impact of the war's propaganda and post-war opinion of its use. As for the governments that will receive attention, Great Britain and France will figure prominently, for if propaganda influenced the war's outcome, then the propaganda of the victors (who experienced the war at its full length) would be the best example of its effective use and associated evils.

One of the first difficulties encountered when writing about propaganda is settling on a definition of the term. In an era such as 1914-1918, there are obvious and classic examples of propaganda such as leaflets dropped behind enemy lines, government-sanctioned films, and recruiting posters. Other mediums are less

blatant, such as propaganda voluntarily produced by a populace, or the voluntary writings of the press. Censorship *per se* is not propaganda at all. It is important, however, to include it in this discussion, if briefly, for immediate and wide-ranging powers of censorship were the first measures belligerent governments took to control and shape information. Censorship bureaucracies predated the propaganda offices and ministries, as is natural: for propaganda to be effective an initial “cleansing” of the market of information is quite helpful. The presence of coordinated propaganda campaigns quite usually implies the existence of an equally coordinated policy of censorship.

In France the censoring of news (which became known as *bourrage de crâne*, or “eyewash”) began immediately upon its entry into the war. As is well known, the war began with an explosion of patriotism, and the sustaining of popular morale was not immediately a problem. The control of tactical information, however, was on the minds of the French military. The State of Siege law, a measure dating back to 1849, was put into effect in early August 1914: military authorities had the right to ban “all newspapers likely to endanger public order and discipline,” as well as censor information that violated broadly defined rules of publication. All peace propaganda was banned.¹ What the censors, under the authority of Minister of War Alexandre Millerand and his French Press Commission, particularly targeted—besides obviously compromising military information and pacifist sympathies—was overt use of hyperbole in the news. Early in the war newspapers commonly printed wild, unfounded stories of imminent Allied victory and despicable German atrocities. The inevitable disappointment the public would feel upon learning that the Russians had in fact not captured Berlin was deemed too damaging to justify the publication of stories claiming such. Additionally, the wide-ranging dissemination of German atrocity stories was deemed dangerous to public morale (as well as hypocritical, should the French army happen to kill civilians). Along with such pessimistic news pieces was censored anything deemed to be excessively optimistic. The main intention of the censorship bureaucracy, which eventually employed up to 2,000 people, was the “calming” of public opinion.²

The growth of a government censorship bureaucracy in France was mirrored in Great Britain. First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill announced the establishment of a Press Bureau on August 6th in order to establish a channel of “trustworthy” news as well as a central office to censor information destined for consumption abroad. Domestic censorship in Great Britain was a voluntary exercise, and in the early phases of the war patriotic fervor drowned out the dissenting voices. Even so, the Defence of the Realm Act acted as a censorship guide for editors of domestic newspapers. The act, known as DORA, was passed by Parliament in August of 1914 and provided broad definitions of censurable material:

No person shall without lawful authority collect, record, publish, communicate, or attempt to elicit any information...of such a nature as is calculated to be or might be directly or indirectly useful to the enemy.³

In the early phases of the war censorship such as that employed by France and England was used primarily to protect military information. Such a strategy is indicative of the common outlook of the belligerents of 1914, who believed the war was not to last but a few months. Thus, in France at least, propaganda targeting enemy soldiers was not initially given much attention, and in both France and Great Britain the government-organized propaganda activities popularly associated with the conflict did not fully emerge until mid-war.⁴ The enthusiasm accompanying the outbreak of hostilities in the summer of 1914 made initial propaganda efforts on the home fronts largely unnecessary, and confidence in quick victory precluded attempts to demoralize the enemy. Thus censorship embodied the earliest stages of belligerent governments’ control of information, and the leap from censoring the home front to its active persuasion would be a small one.

The earliest non-censorship propaganda efforts were aimed at garnering favorable international opinion, and it is to this end that the French and British propaganda structures came into being. France relied on pre-war organizations to target populations of countries not yet involved in the conflict, most notably the international network of organizations that promoted French culture.

The Alliance Française, for example, had 60,000 members across Europe at the outbreak of hostilities, and by April 1916 its *Bulletin* was being published in ten different languages. During the war the *Bulletin* was devoted entirely to promoting the French cause and, thus, disseminating French propaganda to diverse peoples and locales. The Alliance Française also sponsored propaganda campaigns targeting specific religious groups.⁵ The first two years of the war saw grassroots propaganda activity easily out-producing official government efforts, as 30,000 independent societies with 11 million members had contributed to propaganda efforts in some way by 1917. In an attempt to streamline propaganda and solidify government control over information and the press, the French formed the Maison de la Presse in 1916. To this new office the independent propaganda campaigns conducted throughout the country ostensibly became subject, and from this point forward the French government was the main producer of propaganda and monitor of public opinion at home and abroad.⁶

Great Britain did not enter World War I for reasons of immediate threat to its wellbeing; unlike in France, an invasion was not being repelled, and therefore true political unity was never accomplished even at the most harmonious of times. This fact lent itself to a good deal of political wrangling over the propaganda bureaucracy. When the need for censorship and propaganda became apparent, there was a fair amount of accompanying skepticism surrounding the government spending money on what could amount to campaign literature for the majority party. It was under this cloud of uncertainty, along with a supposed British distaste for any government propaganda activity, that Britain's official propaganda efforts got underway.⁷ The first attempt was the so-called Wellington House propaganda office, named after the headquarters of the Insurance Commissioners out of which it operated. Wellington House's first director was Charles Masterman, a Liberal and former newspaper editor (the control of propaganda efforts by newspapermen would become familiar). Masterman strove for accuracy in the leaflets and pamphlets the office produced, recognized the propagandist benefits of film, and organized the publication of the Bryce Report, a compilation of accounts of German atrocities and undoubtedly

the most influential piece of Allied propaganda of the Great War. Masterman also determined that his organization should remain as secret as possible, lest the public's knowledge of the true source of the propaganda they were consuming damage the government's reputation.⁸

Under Prime Minister David Lloyd George, who took control of the government in December 1916, propaganda efforts became more rigidly organized. Lloyd George had a Department of Information formed, which absorbed the Press Bureau's censorship duties and the propaganda activities of Wellington House. The Department of Information's Advisory Board contained three leading newspapermen, and in 1918 Lord Northcliffe, the most powerful of the newspaper barons and owner of *The Times*, became the Director of Propaganda to Enemy Countries. The final incarnation of the official government control of information under Lloyd George was the Ministry of Information, organized in early 1918 with the powerful newspaper proprietor Lord Beaverbrook as Minister.⁹ Like France, the latter half of the war for Great Britain was characterized by propaganda being more tightly controlled as it came under more overt government auspices, yet with some of the most powerful private businessmen running the machinery and thus having considerable sway in government policy.

As has been alluded to, the term propaganda is in fact a canopy encompassing several activities and mediums. Not only were the methods of delivery diverse—films, newspapers, postcards, leaflets, pamphlets, posters, and other devices were utilized—but the sources and intended targets of propaganda were similarly varied. Given restrictions of space for this paper, the organization of the types of propaganda will be presented as such: internal propaganda, propaganda targeting neutrals, and propaganda targeting the enemy. This is done for the sake of simplicity in lieu of the far more complex task of addressing the specific physical states of propaganda, while preserving for discussion the most important aspects of that topic.

Propaganda meant to undermine enemy morale was the earliest and least-controversial propagandist activity undertaken by the Allied Powers. The *Bulletin* of the Alliance Française was immediately mobilized to target civilians of the enemy, those of Alsace and Lor-

rain in particular. The *Comité Catholique* (Catholic Committee) of the Alliance Française made special efforts to phrase the war in religious terms for the Catholic worshippers of the German Empire, claiming that the Kaiser's intentions were to harm the Church. Later in the war the storied organization of aerial propaganda delivery, the *Service Aérienne*, was organized, and under the leadership of Jean Jacques Waitz (also known by the codename *Hansi*), an escaped Alsatian and enthusiastic propagandist, constant inundation of the German trenches with leaflets ensued. Also dispersed among the German lines were French-published newspapers that were designed to increase war-weariness: *Die Feldpost*, for example, opined on the joys of civilian life and Christmas time spent with family. Another recurring strategy of the Allies was to demonize the Kaiser. Leaflets with pictures depicting Wilhelm II, his sons, and/or generals living in a lap of luxury while also portraying the unearthly misery being experienced by German soldiers and civilians were routinely disseminated among the enemy troops.¹⁰

The Allies did not only proclaim the hopelessness of the German cause when creating propaganda for enemy consumption; much effort was expended to drive a wedge between the Central Powers of Austria-Hungary and the German Empire. The Allies informed German civilians that food was plentiful in Austria-Hungary, and vice versa, and much was done to play on feelings of nationalism among the ethnic minorities fighting for the Hapsburgs. When the dispersal of leaflets reached its peak in late 1918, the Allies were releasing 100,000 a day, or about four to five million leaflets a month, behind enemy lines. Varying methods of dispersion were experimented with throughout the war, and ranged from firing leaflet-filled canisters from trench mortars, to dropping literature from airplanes (by far the most common practice), to floating balloons armed with timed release mechanisms over enemy trenches.¹¹

Internal propaganda—that is, material distributed within a given country's borders and meant for home-front consumption—is more difficult to identify than is propaganda that targets the enemy. There is propaganda produced by governments as well as patriotic material created by independent groups enthusiastic toward the war efforts. The latter example predominated in the early years of

the war as enthusiasm was high among the populations of France and Great Britain.

This unanimity of pro-war sentiment was closest to reality in France upon that nation's invasion. French president Raymond Poincaré called upon all in the nation to rally in defense of the *Union Sacrée*, or Sacred Union, early in the war, and the French responded resoundingly. A good example is the response of the nation's socialists and socialist leaders such as Jean Jaurès, who passionately advocated the Third Republic's defense. French schoolteachers, before the war a group solidly in the socialist and pacifist camps, came to the war effort's aid *en masse* at the war's outbreak and happily participated in dispersing patriotic propaganda to French youth through the nation's school system. Between 1915 and 1920 the government waged an aggressive campaign in the nation's schools for the purchase of war bonds, and knowledge of the inhumanity of the invading German forces was imparted to all schoolchildren.¹² The intellectual element of French society also leapt to defense of its country, and by the end of the war had created a massive body of propaganda for both internal and international consumption. The *Comité d'Etudes et de Documents sur la Guerre* (Committee of Studies and Documents on the War) was operated by leading intellectuals from the nation's academic institutions, and employed the writings of some of the country's most prestigious writers in support of the war effort.¹³

August of 1914 saw a less thoroughly pro-war population in Great Britain. Not bordering any enemy nation or facing imminent invasion, isolationist and pacifist voices persisted through the calls to arms. Powerful interests in the Cabinet, the Liberal Party, and the private sphere were opposed to intervention. But the extent of opposition to the war in Britain should not be overestimated. In early August 1914 no national newspaper opposed the war, and in Parliament hardly any dissenting votes were cast against the government's war measures. And Germany's invasion of Belgium quickly solidified a pro-war majority in England.¹⁴

A nuance to England's internal propagandist activity was its reliance on a volunteer army. Because of this factor, the main thrust of English home front propaganda was aimed at recruitment. The

Central Committee for National Patriotic Associations (CCNPA) was organized in August of 1914 to induce people to write on the causes of the war and the justice of England's intervention on the side of France and Belgium, thus encouraging enlistment into the armed services. Speeches and rallies were orchestrated by the Committee throughout the war, as well as printed propaganda material; by 1916, the Committee had produced 250,000 pamphlets, books, and other publications.¹⁵ Indeed, it is from British recruitment efforts that we get many classic images of World War I propaganda. Secretary of War Lord Kitchener saw a massive campaign of persuasion as the best tool for building a large army in the absence of conscription, and it is toward this end that the most visible home-front propaganda was produced. The strategies of the campaign were varied. Patriotic appeals to king and country were common themes, as well as the demonization of the Germans as "huns" that became routine and aroused the ire of critics of Great War propaganda in the inter-war period (more is to be said on this "genre" of propagandist material shortly). Active campaigns for recruitment and the purchase of war bonds typified both France and Britain's internal propaganda activities.

From the beginning of hostilities, the Allies initiated an aggressive campaign to win over the support of neutral nations, especially the United States, and it is here that we see ingenious persuasion strategies employed by the Entente. The French, as would Britain, adopted a subtle approach when courting the American population: French ambassador to Washington Jules Jusserand counseled his superiors to be as discreet as possible, understanding American aversion to propaganda. The strategy of supplying a "low-key campaign of accurate information" would prove favorable for French interests especially when compared with the German strategy of propaganda in the USA, which has generally been considered a failure due to its overt attempt to sway the opinion of a public keenly determined to avoid being hoodwinked by the governments of Europe. Nonetheless, there was a concerted effort to "tell the French side" in the United States, as French orators, academics, artists, and celebrities toured the American countryside recounting stories of French battlefield heroics and German barbarism. It was also considered valuable

to simply keep aspects of French culture visible in American society: the French government sponsored talks and art exhibitions, as well as displays of the latest battlefield technology.¹⁶

The French were not only competing against German propagandists in the arena of American public opinion, for the British were also avidly pursuing the sympathies of the United States. And the propaganda efforts of Great Britain in the United States were among the most skillful campaigns of persuasion undertaken in the war. From the outset of their American efforts the British decided on a low profile for their propaganda, recognizing America's determination to plot its own course. In 1916 English professor Gilbert Murray, advising the government on the proper strategy to pursue in the USA, wrote of the Americans, "They know their own case, pro and con, far better than we can."¹⁷ Thus the British, like the French, sought to frame themselves as purveyors of accurate yet favorable information as opposed to literature transparent in its intention to change opinion.

The marriage of the British to the purpose of providing information more so than propaganda to Americans was exemplified by the attitudes of the head of British propaganda in America, Sir Gilbert Parker, who referred to his efforts as the production of "publicity" rather than propaganda. Already known to many in the United States as a novelist and philanthropist, Parker placed in American newspapers a stream of interviews with prominent Britons and organized speeches and rallies featuring supporters of England's cause.¹⁸ Parker, a Canadian who had extensive experience in the United States prior to the war, intimately understood the importance of small-town newspapers, and throughout his tenure as head of British "publicity" he cultivated a close relationship with 360 smaller papers throughout the Union.¹⁹

Along with Parker's advantageous relationship with the American media, he displayed a keen understanding of the façade of openness that would work most efficiently given American suspicions of European propagandist activity. When he arranged for a well-known British writer to pen a pro-English article for American publication, he never censored what was submitted. Thus, Americans were often exposed to refreshing propaganda of a self-ques-

tioning nature: the Entente was by no means sacrosanct and above criticism, but, all things considered, was clearly fighting on the side of right.²⁰

In World War I, how the Entente commonly justified its military policy to its populations and people of neutral nations was by the liberal use of so-called atrocity propaganda, which emphasized the heinous crimes committed by enemy (and almost certainly German) soldiers and/or the simply inhuman, barbaric nature of the German race. This genre of propaganda can be divided into two spheres of material, that which emphasized actual episodes of brutality and that which was not based on real events, and has come to characterize Great War propaganda much more than the unprecedented methods of dispersal, ingenious courting of neutrals such as the Americans, or efficient government bureaucracies mentioned heretofore. Rather, the lasting reputation of the propaganda of World War I is indelibly tied to this, at the convenience of hindsight, morally questionable method of instilling terror and hatred in civilian populations, which has since colored our opinion of government-influenced public opinion. Atrocity propaganda's regretted excesses turned the propaganda efforts of the Allies from a lauded tool of victory into a distained relic of jingoism and xenophobia.

The act of invading Belgium and the northern frontier of France put the German Empire on the moral defensive early in the conflict, an orientation that would continue throughout the war. Belgium's violation served as a rallying cry for British interventionists, and the German task of pacifying an occupied population would provide fodder for Entente propagandists for years to come. The French capitalized on the propaganda value of German occupation techniques with Joseph Bédier's publication of proof of German atrocities found in the captured diaries of German soldiers. With some careful editing, these diaries seemed to prove that the German army was handling civilian resistance with unnecessary levels of violence, so much so that many of the diary entries expressed regret for the orders carried out against the conquered Belgians and French.²¹ Also in 1915 the British released the Bryce Report, a selective compilation and analysis of "uncivilized" German conduct in occupied Belgium and France. Carrying the seal of the re-

spected Lord Bryce, former Ambassador to Washington, the report was based on 1,200 depositions by Belgian refugees and to the Allies seemed to be final proof of heinous German actions, even though the testimonies were not delivered under oath and much was hearsay evidence. And of course, the report's effect on American opinion was carefully considered: a more succinct edition of the report was published in brochure form for American consumption in 1916.²²

During the Great War the apparently definitive proof of Germany's wrongdoings spawned a whirlwind of completely unsubstantiated material that, fueled by the hate that accompanies wartime, worked to completely dehumanize the Germans. To be fair, it is safe to say that most hyperbolic propaganda meant to demonize the enemy was produced unofficially, that is to say by independent journals, newspapers, and organizations. In this realm of privately controlled print material, the examples of atrocity propaganda are innumerable, and this type of material was a mainstay of the popular media throughout the war years. France and Britain's newspaper industries (along with, importantly, that of the United States) thrived on dubiously trustworthy accounts of barbarous German conduct.²³ Accompanying the words of this sensationalist media were the powerful and lasting images produced by newspapers and magazine. Just as numerous as the verbal accounts of atrocity, images of Germans or beasts dressed in German army regalia committing unspeakable acts of cruelty toward women and children peppered periodicals for years.²⁴

Atrocity propaganda is an example of how World War I, a war between "civilized" nations and supposedly a conflict over sacred ideals, was capable of descending to the depths of the basest human emotions. And this paper's earlier claim that most of this unfounded atrocity propaganda emanated from the popular media should not be taken to mean that the government or the more educated were not complicit in this representation of the war. The Bryce Report, while outwardly loyal to principles of the objective compilation of information, nonetheless used loosely constructed standards of testimony to conclude that at the hands of Germany, "[m]urder, lust, and pillage prevailed over many parts of Belgium on a scale

unparalleled in any war between civilised nations during the last three centuries.”²⁵ Rudyard Kipling, who worked as a propagandist for the British government throughout the war, came to grasp the power of hatred, touting it as “the means to attain invincible resolve.” His mission to cultivate this resolve led him to fully participate in the mudslinging, and he succinctly stated the feeling of the Allied nations when he wrote: “However the world pretends to divide itself, there are only two divisions in the world today—human beings and Germans.”²⁶

The Allied propagandists understood the emotions that needed to be manipulated. The British in particular mastered the strategy of portraying the war against Germany as a crusade for the protection of women and children, and as revenge for grievous wrongs done to these groups in Belgium.²⁷ The war was no longer about technical violations of international law, and it was this shift that the German government never fully appreciated. When the West expressed horror at the execution of British nurse Edith Cavell, the Germans responded with legal arguments soundly grounded in international rules of espionage and its punishment.²⁸ The execution was just given her crime, but the German explanation at best resembled a hurried defensive argument.²⁹

The Allied propagandists had presented the war as a simplistic contest of right versus wrong, civilized culture versus an alien *Kultur*, and were successful in doing so.³⁰ It is here where we find the most lasting legacy of World War I propaganda. In the English-speaking world, the term propaganda almost always carries a negative connotation, for it tends to denote unthinking ideology, conclusions without substance. But is it fair to attribute the distaste for propaganda to the attempts to spread propaganda to enemy troops, or even to the efforts of the Allied governments to safeguard military tactics and strategy from publication? Not in the slightest, as these uncontroversial acts are as much a part of war as are bombs and bullets: dispersion of leaflets to enemy troops is a completely acceptable reality of warfare, and propaganda efforts along these lines seem almost mundane. Rather, it is the demonization of the enemy that tends to attract criticism, the distillation of the goals of the war down to a simplified matter of good versus evil.

If the enemy population needs to be continuously represented as bloodthirsty, pillaging ogres in order to justify continuing the armed struggle against them, then the idea that one is fighting to make the world “safe for democracy” comes into question. And recruiting posters exaggerating and misrepresenting the conduct of the enemy in order to encourage recruitment pushed the less than enthusiastic members of that generation to question the objects for which the democratic nations were fighting. Former Allied soldier Hendrik de Man, who would become a socialist activist during the interwar period, was among those who formed negative opinions of propaganda efforts:

The masses everywhere *started* fighting because they were forced to do so, or led to believe...through the machinery by which a leading minority makes public opinion, that they were defending their homes, their families and their possessions against an enemy bent on taking all this away from them....³¹

The “machinery” by which the ruling elites create fear in the hearts of the public of “an enemy bent on taking” everything dear is not propaganda targeting neutral populations in Holland or the US, or subversive leaflets scattered over enemy trenches. What de Man addresses is the more visible—and memorable—propaganda of atrocities, the propaganda juxtaposing the peaceful and pastoral with the inhuman enemy.

It is the regrettably sensational realm of atrocity propaganda on which much post-war literature focused, which may be why the less exciting propagandist activities faded from memory while the vitriolic, dehumanizing propaganda wholly enveloped the term, lending to our current distaste for all things “propaganda.” Atrocity propaganda certainly seems to be what shaped American author and academic George Sylvester Viereck’s opinion when he wrote his 1930 indictment of propaganda *Spreading the Germs of Hate*:

No one is entirely propaganda-immune, even as no one entirely escapes all children’s diseases. The forms of propaganda are too mutable. Its approach is too cunning. It is more insidious than malaria, more deadly than the plague.

His exhortation that “The propagandist gets you if you don’t watch out”³² speaks for a healthy segment of the war population: they fell for the hyperbole of the recruiting posters and films, and this they regretted. Another good example of the staying power of the atrocity stories is Arthur Ponsonby’s *Falsehood in War-time*, published in 1928, which is “an assortment of lies circulated throughout the nations during the Great War” accompanied by Ponsonby’s own respective refutations. Combined with his own deep regret for the war (he was a pacifist Liberal MP before the conflict), his casting of light upon World War I propaganda is portentous:

None of the heroes prepared for suffering and sacrifice, none of the common herd ready for service and obedience, will be inclined to listen to the call of their country once they discover the polluted sources from whence that call proceeds and recognize the monstrous finger of falsehood which beckons them to the battlefield.³³

For Ponsonby the terms “propaganda” and “falsehood” are interchangeable and indistinguishable, a result not unforeseeable if one dwells on Ponsonby’s examples as encompassing illustrations of the propaganda effort.

Given the modern distaste for all things labeled as propaganda, and our common use of the term as a pejorative description of distasteful or radical points of view, it may be that de Man’s, Viereck, and Ponsonby’s characterizations of propaganda speak for society. These men—one Belgian, one American, and one English—were on the winning side, but could not shake their regret for the cost of victory. The Great War saw unprecedented campaigns to shape public information, and inaugurated modern mechanisms and strategies toward that end. As never before, national authorities appreciated the contribution of propaganda to military success, but after the war, and nearly a century later, it is the enthusiasm with which they pursued the demonization of their enemy that is remembered. World War I, more than previous conflicts, gave us efficient means of shaping opinion as well as an aversion to overzealous propaganda, and thus fundamentally influenced twentieth century culture.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Jean-Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French People*, trans. Arnold Pomerans (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986) 48-49.
- ² Becker, *French People*, 42, 49, 59; Leonard V. Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Annette Becker, *France and the Great War, 1914-1918*, trans. Helen McPhail (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 54.
- ³ Cate Haste and Allen Lane, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: Trinity, 1977) 30.
- ⁴ George B. Brantz, *Allied Propaganda and the Collapse of the German Empire in 1918* (New York: Arno, 1972, 1938) 9.
- ⁵ Brantz, *Allied Propaganda*, 10-11.
- ⁶ Brantz, *Allied Propaganda*, 13-15.
- ⁷ Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in World War I* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1927;1971) 19.
- ⁸ Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique*, 19; Haste, *Home Fires*, 37-38; Charles Roetter, *The Art of Psychological Warfare 1914-1945* (New York: Stein and Day, 1974) 33.
- ⁹ Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge: British Society and the First World War* (New York: Norton, 1965) 212; Haste, *Home Fires*, 40, 44; Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 36.
- ¹⁰ Brantz, *Allied Propaganda*, 11-12, 16; Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique*, 166, 178; Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 71-72.
- ¹¹ Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique*, 168, 174, 181-184.
- ¹² Mona L. Siegel, *The Moral Disarmament of France: Education, Pacifism, and Patriotism, 1914-1940* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 19-36.
- ¹³ Smith et al, *France and the Great War*, 55-56; Martha Hanna, *The Mobilization of Intellect: French Scholars and Writers during the Great War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996) *passim*.
- ¹⁴ Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique*, 48; Haste, *Home Fires*, 22.
- ¹⁵ Brantz, *Allied Propaganda*, 18-19; Similar to the situation in France, the CCNPA and Charles Masterman's Wellington House operation had little trouble enlisting Britain's leading

intellectuals to produce written propaganda for allied and neutral populations. Writers such as Rudyard Kipling, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and H.G. Wells served their nation in this manner. See Ian F.W. Beckett, *The Great War 1914-1918* (Harlow, UK: Pearson, 2001) 284; Haste, *Home Fires*, 24-26.

¹⁶ Robert J. Young, *Marketing Marianne: French Propaganda in America, 1900-1940* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004) 49-59.

¹⁷ Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 63.

¹⁸ For examples of Sir Gilbert Parker's profile in the American media, and its favorable depiction, see "Parker Defends Blockade," *New York Times*, 25 October 1915, <proquest.umi.com> (16 March 2006); "Belgians' Bitter Need of Our Aid," *New York Times*, 6 December 1914, <proquest.umi.com> (16 March 2006).

¹⁹ Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 64; Sir Gilbert Parker, "The United States and the War," *Harper's Magazine*, 1918, in Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique*, 155-156.

²⁰ Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 64, 60; Parker himself wrote articles that stoutly criticized British actions. For an example, see Sir Gilbert Parker, "Sir Gilbert Parker Flays English Extravagance," *New York Times*, 14 November 1915, <www.proquest.com> (16 March 2006).

²¹ Also revealed was the German soldiers' sincere fear of the nearly mythical *franc-tireur*, a French civilian operating as a guerilla fighter, bands of which caused genuine misery for the Prussian forces in 1870-71; John Horne and Alan Kramer, "German 'Atrocities' and Franco-German Opinion, 1914: The Evidence of German Soldiers' Diaries," *Journal of Modern History* 66 (1994): 1-33, online via JSTOR, <www.jstor.org/> (9 February 2006).

²² Haste, *Home Fires*, 93-94; Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 47-48; Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique*, 88-89.

²³ The most infamous of which was the story of the "corpse-conversion" factory being operated by the Germans (also known as the *Kadaver* story). Supposedly, the bodies of Allied soldiers, along with those of massacred Belgians, were being systemati-

cally broken down and converted into useful products to be used by the German military and civilian population. See Haste, *Home Fires*, 90; Marwick, *The Deluge*, 213.

²⁴ Haste, *Home Fires*, 84-88; John Williams, *The Home Fronts: Britain, France, and Germany, 1914-1918* (London: Constable, 1972) 215-216.

²⁵ *The Bryce Report: Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages*, (United Kingdom: 1915), <www.firstworldwar.com/source/brycereport.htm> (16 March 2006).

²⁶ Haste, *Home Fires*, 81.

²⁷ For an excellent discussion on the British success at transforming the international debate decidedly in their favor using this strategy, see Nicoletta F. Gullace, "Sexual Violence and Family Honor: British Propaganda and International Law during the First World War," *American Historical Review* 103 (1997): 714-747, online via JSTOR, <www.jstor.org> (27 January 2006).

²⁸ See "Arthur Zimmerman on the Execution of Edith Cavell, 12 October 1915," <www.firstworldwar.com/source/cavell_zimmermann.htm> (16 March 2006).

²⁹ In addition to being on the defensive from British and French propaganda, the Germans suffered from a considerable lack of foresight in their own propaganda planning. Germany created its own atrocity propaganda intended for consumption in neutral nations that implicated the Belgian population and the actions of Allied troops, yet never translated this material *out* of German. Roetter, *Psychological Warfare*, 51.

³⁰ See the characterizations of German actions in the speech delivered by President Woodrow Wilson to the joint session of Congress that declared war, and in a speech by former President William H. Taft shortly thereafter. In Charles F. Horne, ed., *Source Records of the Great War*, vol. 5, (Indianapolis: American Legion, 1930) 107-123.

³¹ From Hendrik de Man, *The Remaking of a Mind: A Soldier's Thoughts on War and Reconstruction* in Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee and Frans Coetzee, *World War I and European Society: A*

Sourcebook (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1995) 354. Emphasis is de Man's.

³² George Sylvester Viereck, *Spreading the Germs of Hate* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1930) 298, 297.

³³ Arthur Ponsonby, M.P., *Falsehood in War-time: Containing an Assortment of Lies Circulated throughout the Nations during The Great War* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1928) 29.

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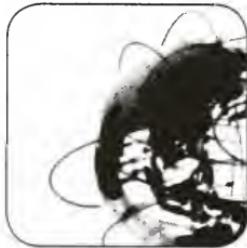
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Bottoms Up:

Civil Society and Grass Roots Democracy in India

BRENNNA SCHNEIDER

Civil society has become an important force in India, the world's largest democracy, because Indian democracy is built on a shaky foundation. India's socio-political history is not conducive to participatory democracy yet, in 1947, at the dawn of Indian independence, its leaders believed that democracy would carry India toward a brighter future. These leaders inspired a top-down democracy which has yet to reach the majority of India's population. Today, civil society is building the democratic foundation that the Indian government has yet to actualize: it is creating a grassroots democracy which empowers India's rural majority from the bottom up. Civil society's work in Northwest India exemplifies this national phenomenon. To elucidate civil society's relation to democratic and development initiatives, civil society will be defined, the legacies of Indian political history will be examined, and current examples from Northwest India will be cited, where a foundation for grassroots participatory democracy is being built by civil society's four pillars: advocacy, government support, empowerment, and the creation of democratic consciousness.

In vernacular language, civil society's meaning has become broadened and "international funding agencies, nongovernmental organizations and institutions...trade unions and social movements subscribe equally to the validity of the concept."¹ The academic definition of civil society is, however, much more specific. Scholars such as Alexis de Tocqueville and Robert Putnam believe that civil society has a specific purpose: to strengthen the foundation of a nation's democracy. They argue that the term civil society describes an increasingly influential group of non-state actors who build democracy upwards, starting with the grassroots. Robert Cox's definition supports their findings:

Civil society is not just an assemblage of actors, i.e. autonomous social groups. It is also the realm of contesting ideas in which the intersubjective meanings upon which people's sense of 'reality' are based can become transformed and new concepts of the natural order of society can emerge.²

Cox's definition asserts that civil society works to instill democratic "realities" at the grassroots level which give individuals a democratic voice to influence the future of their nation's government. Through advocacy, government support, empowerment, and the creation of democratic consciousness, civil society strengthens democracy. Indian civil society must not only strengthen Indian democracy, but it must build the foundation for a participatory democracy. India's political history significantly challenges these efforts.

In 1947 India achieved independence from Great Britain and began its transformation toward democracy. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, the primary architect of India's constitution, was skeptical about the potential quality of his country's democracy. He saw Indian democracy as "a top down dressing on an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic."³ Ambedkar recognized that in approximately 100 years, British colonialism had permeated Indian institutions and the Indian psyche. British rule institutionalized social and economic inequality and built a centralized political power structure that marginalized the majority of Indian citizens. Ambedkar realized that the legacy of colonialism made it extremely difficult to transform Indian society into one in which democracy could thrive.

Indian leaders looked toward a democratic future, but like Ambedkar, they were forced to recognize that even after independence, the legacies of colonialism would continue to confront them.

The prelude to British colonial rule began in the early 17th century when the East India Company first established trade between Great Britain and India. The company became increasingly involved in Indian economic and political affairs and exercised substantial control over the subcontinent until the mid-19th century. In 1858 the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act, “transferring ‘all rights’ that the company had hitherto enjoyed on Indian soil directly to the crown.”⁴ Great Britain took control of the entire Indian subcontinent, turning India into one of its many colonies.

In India, colonial rule was centralized in New Delhi. Great Britain wanted both economic prosperity and political power from its colony and so British leaders put forth great effort to exert control over their vast colony from this central location. To accomplish their goals, they were forced to be highly organized and forward-thinking. They invested in building infrastructure, implemented a British-based education system, and began developing and modernizing the subcontinent: “Administratively, India became one—an achievement unparalleled in the political history of India.”⁵ Nonetheless, although the British administrated “one” colony, India was by no means united.

The British ruled with an uneven reach and uneven policies, which impacted India’s diverse and vast regions differently. In some regions British influence was hardly noticeable, as feudalism was left intact.⁶ In other regions, the British exerted their power with great strength. The majority of Indians who lived under direct British rule were treated as second class citizens and therefore suffered greatly. Indians were not given the same opportunities as those given to the British: “The wall that insulated white *sahib* society from the natives suddenly loomed impervious to any but a handful of princes and landed gentry, and even they complained of feeling mistrusted, eternally suspect outsiders.”⁷ Colonialism left the vast majority of Indians impoverished, uneducated, and marginalized. It benefited a minority of Indian elites who were able to become educated, but who still found themselves unable to achieve true political power.

Indian elites understood this disadvantage and their inability to control India's political destiny. They were discontented with India's subjugation to Great Britain and their inferiority to British colonists who were equally educated and skilled. Indeed, this "sense of humiliation and status deprivation brought these Indian people together and forced them, despite their diverse ethnic and religious origins, to think about the political issues in all-India terms."⁸ Thus began the Indian nationalist movement. The Indian National Congress Party led a movement to unite Indians toward a common goal—*independence*. In the name of this goal, great leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi inspired Indians from all walks of life to fuse their innate cultural, religious, and individual strengths to create a nationalist movement. Gandhi's hope was to inspire a return to Indian civil society.

Indian civil society was buried beneath centuries of British control, but Gandhi strived to uncover and reshape it. He believed in the collective potential of his countrymen, especially the rural majority, to lead India toward an independent future. Gandhi instilled nationalism in Indian villages. He promoted *satyagraha*, "soul force," which led to the practices of non-cooperation and *swaraja*, Indian self-reliance and self-rule.⁹ These, along with other elements of Indian nationalism, were based on organic "attitudes of tolerance between social groups, conceptions of a self-regulating society under a limited state, and a kind of individualism in the Hindu doctrine of responsibility for one's own religious destiny through personal choices made on this earth."¹⁰ Historically these were the aspects of indigenous civil society and elements of traditional local governance:

Indian village communities have carried on governance through local bodies over centuries. In Vedic times, these village bodies were known as *Sabhas*. Village *Panchayats*, as they gradually came to be known, were institutions of grassroots governance in every village and had large powers, both executive and judicial.¹¹

These elements and attitudes, which comprised Indian civil society, were the foundation of Gandhi's plan for economic and political development in an independent India.

Though Gandhi's nationalist movement successfully achieved independence in 1947, his vision of village-level civil society and development was overshadowed by Jawaharlal Nehru's plan to make India a democratic-socialist welfare state. Indian elites preferred Nehru's model and, rather than build a grassroots civil society, "they opted to build a modern nationalist state on the twin principles of democracy and socialism."¹² Nehru believed in state-sponsored modernization and advancements in technology and industry.¹³ His government promised that modernization and socialism would address the poverty and inequality which afflicted the nation, while democracy would give an equal political voice to all Indians.

While the Indian welfare state promised development and the alleviation of poverty, it subsequently created dependence:

[The state] began to intervene in areas that had been hitherto left to civil society. The Constitution, which declared justice—social, economic, and political— equality of status and of opportunity, and the promotion of fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual as the objectives of the Indian state, provided the necessary legitimacy to this deliberate intrusion.¹⁴

This dependence prevented Indian citizens from participating in their development. Rather than uplift the Indian masses, Nehru's state perpetuated a patron-subject relationship. In the years following independence, 80 percent of India's population engaged in agriculture and therefore lived in rural India.¹⁵ Disconnected from India's centralized democracy, villagers continued to be excluded from Indian politics and democracy. They were therefore not able to realize their democratic potential and the Indian state was unable to establish a foundation of participatory democracy.

Dr. Ambedkar's predictions were thus proved correct. He realized that in the wake of colonialism, India's top-down democracy would struggle to develop a strong foundation. While the Congress Party, led by Nehru, believed that democracy and a socialist state-centered development strategy would benefit the masses, its efforts made India's population dependant on a state which proved ineffective at fulfilling its promises of reform. Dependency and failed at-

tempts to address poverty, empower India's rural majority, and build a democratic foundation continue to challenge India's leaders.

Today, Indian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) recognize the shortcomings of India's shallow, top-down democracy and are taking action to overcome them. Numerous NGOs in Northwest India are examples of the nationwide work being done to alleviate poverty, empower India's rural majority, and build a foundation for India's democracy. Among these organizations are Seva Mandir in Udaipur, Rajasthan; Navdanya in Dehra Dun, Uttarranchal; and Salaam Baalak Trust in New Delhi. After spending time observing the efforts of these organizations, I argue that Indian civil society is composed of four pillars: advocacy, government support, empowerment, and the creation of democratic consciousness. Each plays a distinct and essential role in bringing democracy to India's grassroots and making the voice of the grassroots heard.

Advocacy and government support are two aspects of civil society which strive to make up for the pervasive quality of Nehru's welfare state. Rather than encourage Indians to depend on their government to create and implement policy on their behalf, these two pillars of civil society involve India's populace in its government's political discourse, policy making, and implementation. Advocacy is the first pillar of civil society. It allows groups of citizens to influence political discourse and their government's decisions: "grassroots activism... has the potential of transforming the nature of the state system as a whole [because civil society] often represents a different set of priorities and assumptions from those of traditional policy elites."¹⁶ Advocacy brings a diversity of opinions, priorities and issues to policy makers. It represents a collective opinion, not an individual opinion: "In a civic community...citizens pursue what Tocqueville termed 'self-interest properly understood,' that is, self-interest defined in the context of broader public needs, self-interest that is 'enlightened' rather than 'myopic,' self-interest that is alive to the interests of others."¹⁷ This enlightened self-interest is what organizations advocate to the government.

Navdanya, a nongovernmental organization located in Dehra Dun, Uttarranchal, has achieved many of its goals through advocacy. Navdanya began in 1987 and dedicated itself to conserving

and saving seeds to ensure the continued biodiversity of India's agricultural sector. It has grown substantially and now advocates on behalf of its current membership of over 200,000 farmer families in 13 Indian states. Indeed, one of the organization's recent successes has been a campaign of advocacy for organic farming on the national level.

Navdanya believes that in accordance with Indian tradition, farming should continue to be a way of life, not an industry. Chemical farming is quickly industrializing India's agricultural sector at the cost of many local and subsistence farmers. Navdanya has responded to this development by arguing that chemicals, patented seeds, and genetically modified organisms are contributing to India's rural poverty. It asserts that in India:

Chemical agriculture and genetic engineering are threatening public health and leading to nutrition decline. Costs of production, which includes hybrid and genetically engineered seeds, chemicals and irrigation etc., are increasing with every season pushing farmers into the debt trap and also to suicides.¹⁸

The organization researches the hazards of chemical farming, teaches sustainable, organic farming, and pressures the Indian government to "go organic."

Uttaranchal's state government has responded favorably to Navdanya's advocacy and has made a commitment to "go organic." The state is now giving incentives to organic farmers and encouraging farmers to move from chemical to organic farming. The state recommends group certifications so that farmers can collectively pay to become certified organic. In 2007 the state will begin implementing its own organic certification system so that Uttaranchal farmers can more easily go organic.

Navdanya's successful advocacy at the national level has made it a leader in a policy-level fight against biopiracy. Navdanya considers biopiracy, the patenting of seeds, plants, and traditional and indigenous bio-related knowledge, a theft of traditional knowledge.¹⁹ For years, Navdanya has advocated on behalf of Indian farmers who, due to these patents, risk losing ownership of agricultural resources and practices central to their livelihood. Navdanya

has won many of the cases it has fought. In 2005, “the European Patent Office upheld a decision to revoke in its entirety a patent on a fungicidal product derived from seeds of the Neem, a tree indigenous to the Indian subcontinent.”²⁰ This is just one example of the power of advocacy. Navdanya seeks to maintain farming as a traditional Indian livelihood and to protect farmers from losing control of their land, resources, and future to agricultural industry. The organization advocates on behalf of India’s majority, its rural farmers, who have never before had the opportunity to make their livelihood a policy-level decision.

Indian civil society and its government must complement and strengthen each other, thereby strengthening Indian democracy: “Civil society is both shaper and shaped; an agent of stabilization, and a potential agent of transformation.”²¹ Advocacy strengthens a nation’s democracy by serving as an agent of transformation. A mutually beneficial relationship between government and civil society is therefore necessary in order for civil society to build a democratic foundation. Rather than work in conflict with its government’s efforts to address its citizens’ social, economic and political needs, civil society must work with and support its government. Thus, government support is the second pillar of civil society.

Government support is an essential element of civil society because “national governments are unable...to provide the kind of welfare services demanded by citizens, who are more and more aware of what they want and how they might get it.”²² Civil society organizations therefore fulfill two roles: they help to implement and administer government funds and programs, and they attend to social needs which the government fails to adequately address. Salaam Balaak Trust (SBT) in New Delhi is an organization which provides government support by fulfilling both roles. This NGO works to solve the problem of street children in India’s capital. Salaam Balaak Trust’s center is located in proximity to the New Delhi Railway Station and serves as a contact point, resource, and form of support for street children who arrive in New Dehli by train. Though this is the NGO’s central mission, it also administers a related government program, the national Childline program, in New Delhi.

Childline is sponsored by the Indian government's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment but is administered by local NGOs in 66 cities across the subcontinent. It is a "national, 24-hour, free, emergency telephone helpline and outreach service for children in need of care and protection."²³ The organization's experience dealing with marginalized and abandoned street children allows it to implement this government program much more effectively than would the government of India. The Indian government depends on NGOs like SBT to run such programs. NGOs therefore strengthen the capability of the Indian government to execute its policies and programs. In return, the government funds SBT, allowing it to continue working to solve the problem of street children, a problem which the government itself does not address. Thus, civil society and the Indian government are dependant upon each other to reach their goals.

Advocacy and government support are important elements of a healthy civil society, and are needed to increase participation in Indian democracy. However, neither advocacy nor government support can be undertaken if a democratic environment is unable to reach the corners of the subcontinent:

Effective civic engagement requires the prevalence of an enabling environment and the exercise of institutional capacities in civil society organizations to influence public debate in order to hold public institutions accountable.²⁴

Civil society must replace the legacy of colonialism with democracy at the village level and in the minds of the Indian populace. For this reason, in India the most important pillars of civil society—and the most difficult to achieve—are empowerment and the creation of a grassroots democratic consciousness.

Empowerment has long been recognized as an essential aspect of civil society: "Political sociologists since Aristotle have argued that the prospects for effective democracy depend on social development and economic well-being."²⁵ Social and economic development allows individuals to look beyond their own survival to build and utilize local capacities in order to create associations and address collective needs. Civil society must be founded on "both the

political freedoms associated with the exercise of one's citizenship and the social freedoms associated with the exercise of one's human capabilities.”²⁶ However, these freedoms are impossible to ensure unless India's majority is able to rise above debilitating poverty.

Empowerment begins with a focus on development. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) reports that 28.6 percent of Indians live below the national poverty level and 79.9 percent live on less than two dollars a day.²⁷ Thirty-nine percent of Indians are illiterate, 21 percent are undernourished, and 70 percent lack access to sanitation.²⁸ These statistics tell of India's severe and widespread poverty, as well as the immediate challenges faced by NGOs who seek to empower India's majority. Empowerment at the grassroots level allows individuals to look beyond their own needs and become a part of Indian civil society. One means of empowerment is capacity building.

Rajesh Tandon, an Indian development scholar who writes about local self-governance for the National Foundation for Indian, describes the importance of capacity building to Indian civil society: “Capacity can be defined as the totality of inputs needed by an actor to realize his/her purposes.”²⁹ He argues that there are three types of capacities which can be built: material capacity, institutional capacity, and intellectual capacity.³⁰ Material capacity, as explained by Tandon, “includes material resources, physical assets, funds, ability, systems and procedures to mobilize revenues; access and control over physical and natural resources and infrastructure.”³¹ Institutional capacities are composed of “(1) the accountability of the executive, (2) the quality of the bureaucracy, (3) the strength of civil society, (4) the rule of law and (5) the transparency of the decision making process.”³² Finally, intellectual capacity “implies the capacity to think, reflect, and analyze reality independently and in pursuit of self-defined purpose of local self-governance.”³³ Each of these capacities helps to empower civil society, creating a foundation for democracy.

Seva Mandir is one of many organizations that operate programs designed to empower India's rural poor through capacity building. One of the organization's initiatives focuses on village women. In 1988 Seva Mandir initiated Sadhna, a handicraft cooperative that

gives women the opportunity to build sewing and design skills. Women then use these skills to produce quilts, clothing, bags, and other cloth-based handicrafts which are sold both nationally and internationally at fair trade prices. Sadhna is based on “the social and economic empowerment of women artisans.”³⁴ It is a demonstration that capacity building improves economic well-being.

Women in the rural village of Seeshwi describe the difference Sadhna has made to them. These women earn wages for their work, providing their family with a supplementary income. One woman brought a small group of visiting researchers and tourists to her house where she proudly explained that her Sadhna wages had allowed her family to save to build their own house. She described that many of the village’s families had only known a life of rural poverty and have benefited greatly from the opportunity to develop the capacities needed to produce Sadhna goods. Generally, she noted that more of the village children are now attending school and that the village’s quality of life has improved. More specifically, she emphasized that many of the women enrolled in the program have applied for micro-loans and have started their own businesses using the capacities Sadhna helped them build.

We observed another example of Sadhna’s empowering effects when one of the women gave a tour of her small tailor shop and showed us the sewing machine she recently bought with a small loan. Her community is her market and her business is small but successful. Another group of women used entrepreneurial capacities to start a business making laundry detergent. These women claim that their detergent is competing with national brands on local and regional levels. In addition to the economic benefits associated with empowerment through capacity building, Seeshwi is an effective example of how empowerment builds civil society. The goal of empowerment in India is “resurrecting a spirit of association in civil society together with a continuing effort by the organic intellectuals of social forces to think through and act towards an alternative social order at local, regional and global levels.”³⁵ Thus, empowerment allows local individuals to build associations and develop capacities that they can then contribute to achieve common goals through the many levels of democracy.

I was able to watch the Seeshwi women meet to discuss both the month's progress and their dissatisfaction with the woman whom they had elected to represent them. This woman was not living up to their expectations and was failing to represent them and the village. The women voiced their concerns and criticisms to the regional Sadhna representative who mediated. The village leader sat amidst the women and heard their complaints about her leadership. This discussion demonstrates that Seeshwi women have a purpose. Capacity building has worked to empower them and has given them a collective vision of local governance. Though Seva Mandir CEO Neelima Khetan claims that community cohesion has been broken in India, she believes that empowerment is one way her organization can rebuild a sense of cohesion or, as termed by Tocqueville, "art of association."³⁶ Empowerment allows members of a community to share a vision for democratic change and to combine skills to realize that vision. This ability and desire to bring about change is the keystone of democracy's foundation.

A democratic force emerges from the grassroots when people rely on their own capabilities and vision. When members of a society allow this democratic force to change them, they have achieved the fourth pillar of civil society, the realization of a democratic consciousness. Neelima Khetan believes that the creation of a democratic consciousness is particularly important because "the state can only do so much. Beyond that, society has to change." She is fully aware that, "it takes a long time to bring about on the ground change." This is, however, the change that Seva Mandir works diligently to achieve.³⁷ The organization's work to create democratic consciousness is an effort to teach Indians that they are citizens.

Khetan believes that "the average Indian does not think of himself as a citizen, the average Indian thinks of himself as a subject."³⁸ The legacy of colonialism continues to exist in rural India. The creation of a democratic consciousness is an effort to transform that legacy into a reflection of India's present democracy so that a foundation for a participatory democracy can be built. This transformation relies on an environment in which social norms become conducive to democracy.

Democratic norms have been studied at great length by scholars such as Alexis de Tocqueville, Robert Putnam and Francis Fukuyama. These norms are often termed social capital. Fukuyama writes that “[n]ot just any set of instantiated norms constitutes social capital; such norms must lead to co-operation in groups and therefore are related to traditional virtues like honesty, the keeping of commitments, reliable performance of duties, reciprocity, and the like.”³⁹ The creation of democratic consciousness is important because in order to make sustainable change “you must change the conditions, the logic, and the education” which affect individuals’ actions and choices and consequently determine social norms.⁴⁰

Khetan believes that not only must Indian civil society hold its government accountable, but it must hold itself accountable: “Villages must ask themselves how *they* are treating poorer families, women, children, and the disadvantaged. It is easy to expect transparency, honesty, and equality from the government, but it is not as easy to live up to those standards.”⁴¹ These norms are important in Rajasthan, the state in which Seva Mandir works, because it has one of India’s lowest gender ratios. A gender ratio reflects the proportion of females to males in a given society. A low gender ratio implies that female babies are aborted or neglected and that overall perceptions of women are lower than those of men. Between 1991 and 2001 the census reported that despite advocacy, the gender ratio in Rajasthan had decreased. In response to the report, frustrations were directed at the Indian government. Khetan reminded her staff at Seva Mandir that, “at the end of the day, it’s the parents’ decision to abort or neglect a girl child. Both parents are making the decision. So much change is needed at the societal level.”⁴² Seva Mandir believes that through education and programs like Sadhna, which builds capacities in hundreds of villages similar to Seeshwi, changes can be made to address this specific challenge and many other challenges to development and democracy.

Capacity building allowed women to contribute in new ways within their families and in their community. These women’s financial contributions and entrepreneurial initiatives have changed the norms in their village. As they continue to develop leadership roles

through Seva Mandir's Sadhna program, they are simultaneously working to build a democratic consciousness based on equality and shared goals of economic and political change. The creation of this democratic consciousness has brought about a sustainable change within their community, thereby serving as a pillar of their democratic foundation. It creates an environment in which social norms reflect democratic ideals and in which individuals can realize their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Each of these organizations works to inspire change. The efforts of Indian civil society are building the country's democratic foundation. Navdanya's advocacy on behalf of Indian farmers and Seva Mandir's capacity building programs are examples of work being done to overcome a challenging political history and a top-down democracy with a shallow reach. As Salaam Balaak Trust continues to support its government's initiatives and to provide services for needs the government does not meet, its work benefits its community and deepens democracy's reach. As individuals and communities are empowered to use their skills for collective goals, change occurs. This change not only allows development and democratic goals to be achieved but it allows a democratic consciousness to emerge so that people participate as citizens, and democratic change is sustained. The work of civil society in Northwest India demonstrates that in each Indian village lies the potential for a participatory democracy and as each village participates, all benefit. The foundation of India's democracy is now being built from the bottom up.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Neera Chandhoke. "A Critique of the Notion of Civil Society as the Third Sphere." *Does Civil Society Matter: Governance in Contemporary India*, ed. Rajesh Tandon and Ranjita Mohanty (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003), 27.
- ² Robert W. Cox "Civil society at the turn of the millennium: prospects for an alternative world order" *Review of International Studies* (1999), 25, 10.

³ André Bétaille, “Civil Society and Voluntary Associations” *A Common Cause: NGOs and Civil Society*, Ed. Anaradhna Maharishi and Rasna Dhillon (New Delhi: National Foundation for India, 2002), 6.

⁴ Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 239.

⁵ Craig Baxter and all, *Government and Politics in South Asia*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2002, 27.

⁶ Baxter, 28.

⁷ Wolpert, 244.

⁸ Baxter, 28.

⁹ Baxter, 34.

¹⁰ Carolyn M. Elliott, “Civil Society and Development,” *Civil Society and Democracy: A Reader*, Ed. Carolyn M. Elliott (Oxford University Pres: Oxford, New York City, 2003) 32.

¹¹ Rajesh Tandon, “Capacity Building for Effective Local Self-Governance,” *A Common Cause: NGOs and Civil Society* (New Delhi: National Foundation for India, 2002), 222.

¹² Baxter, 40.

¹³ Poonam Abbi, *Empowering Civil Society: Seva Mandir Working Paper Series* (Udaipur India: Seva Mandir, August 1998) 4.

¹⁴ Jayaprakash Narayan, “The Crisis of Governance,” *Does Civil Society Matter: Governance in Contemporary India*, ed. Rajesh Tandon and Ranjita Mohanty. (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003), 80-81.

¹⁵ Baxter, 38.

¹⁶ Scott Turner, “Global Civil Society, Anarchy, and Governance: Accessing an Emerging Paradigm,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 35. No.1 (January 1998), 32.

¹⁷ Robert D. Putnam, Robert D. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 88.

¹⁸ Navdanya, *Navdanya: Two decades of service to the Earth and Small Farmers* (2005), 3.

¹⁹ Vinod Kumar Bhatt. Navdanya Presentation, Bija Vidyapeeth Education Center, Dehradun, Utterranchal, India, March 16, 2006

²⁰ Navdanya, *European Patent Office Upholds Decision to Revoke Neem Patent*, (Munich, Germany, March 8, 2005) <http://www.navdanya.org/news/05march8.htm>.

²¹ Cox, 4-5.

²² Ronnie D. Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society" *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (1992), 419.

²³ Childline India Foundation, *Hello Childline*, Issue 43 (December 2005).

²⁴ William Reuben, "Good Governance and Civic Engagement." *Culture of Responsibility and the Role of NGOs*. Ed. Taj I Hammad, Frederick A. Swarts, Anne R. Smart. (St. Paul Minnesota: Paragon House, 2003), 28.

²⁵ Putnam, 11.

²⁶ Daniel Little. *The Paradox of Wealth and Poverty: Mapping the Ethical Dilemmas of Global Development*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2003), 225.

²⁷ United Nations Development Program. "Country Sheet." *Human Development Reports: India*. <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=IND>.

²⁸ United Nations Development Program

²⁹ Tandon, 223.

³⁰ Tandon, 224.

³¹ Tandon, 224.

³² William Ratliff, "Development and Civil Society in Latin America and Asia." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences: Civil Society and Democratization*, Vol. 565 (September 1999), 92.

³³ Tandon, 224.

³⁴ Annual Report, 2004-2005, Seva Mandir, 9.

³⁵ Cox, 28.

³⁶ Francis Fukuyama, "Social Capital, civil society and development." *Third World Quarterly*. Vol. 22, No. 1 (2001), 11.

³⁷ Neelima Khetan, Presentation on Seva Mandir. Seva Mandir, Udaipur India. March 22, 2006.

³⁸ Khetan (2006).

³⁹ Fukuyama, 7-8.

⁴⁰ Khetan, interview.

⁴¹ Khetan, interview.

⁴² Khetan, interview.

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Importing Terror

International Influences in Argentina's "Dirty War"

KIMBERLY PROCTOR

The development of new technologies in the past century, including advancements in commercial air travel, telecommunications and microelectronics, has resulted in an increasing interconnectedness of societies across the globe. This interconnectedness has also resulted in the transmission of ideas across state and cultural boundaries. These ideas and influences often serve as catalysts for change within the domestic policies of recipient countries. The resulting globalization, as the phenomenon has been broadly termed, has played a vital role in advancing human rights and democratization in regions as diverse as Eastern Europe, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. It has also, however, served to undermine these same principles. An estimated 30,000 people were tortured, killed or "disappeared" during Argentina's "Dirty War" (1976-1983). International influences, both during that period and in the preceding decades, transferred repressive ideologies that became the basis for a policy of state-sponsored terrorism and torture. The application of these ideas was furthered by technical and military aid by foreign actors. Ideologies, such as German Nazism and Italian Fascism, inspired Argentine leaders and created the basis for civil-military relations. France's fight against anti-colonial forces in

Algeria provided guidance in dealing with “subversives,” while the United States provided military aid and training. Finally, the Roman Catholic Church reinforced practices and methods of repression by giving sanction to those involved.

Argentina’s historical ties to Europe made it especially vulnerable to international influence. Unlike many other Latin American colonies, Argentina lacked a large indigenous population. This factor encouraged European immigration, which was largely responsible for populating the country. In the 1880s millions of immigrants, mostly from Western Europe, began flowing into Argentina.¹ These immigrants carried their cultural traditions to Argentina, and they slowly began to establish ethnic enclaves within the country. German, Italian, and other immigrant populations began establishing schools and social groups that helped them preserve ties to their homelands. This created a uniquely European influence on Argentine society. For example, European capital began to dominate the Argentine economy. By the end of the 19th century, the Argentine economy was largely dependent on the economies of Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. At the dawn of the World Wars, this left Argentina incredibly vulnerable to events occurring outside of its borders.

As Argentina’s stability became increasingly threatened by outside factors, internal problems began to exacerbate the situation. Class divisions between the elite rich minority and the poor majority had been present in the country for centuries. Rich landowners controlled society, and the poor workers had little input in the governance of their own country. Inevitably, this led to a clash between the two major classes over power. Workers began to strike and to demand better working conditions, with little effect, as evidenced by a series of events in the early twentieth century. In January of 1919, the army killed over 100 Argentines who were rioting for improved workers’ rights.² In 1921, soldiers killed over 1,500 workers who had already surrendered and been promised amnesty.³ In both instances, the military buried the workers in a mass grave and failed to publicly recognize the slaughter.

The army’s use of force on unarmed citizens set a new precedent in Argentine society. It demonstrated to the right-wing factions in

society, as well as to the military, that they were no longer limited to controlling the working class by conventional methods. Tactics such as murder and fear were now thought to be useful ways to control any dissention. By the mid 1940s, these new tactics had led to the emergence of the army as an independent force in society with strong economic independence and momentum.⁴ The army controlled the aircraft industry and exercised an unprecedented amount of power over society. This influence would only continue to expand as World War II proceeded.

German World War II Influence

The combination of global connections and internal unrest set the stage for social change in Argentina. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Nazi groups began to use their economic ties to infiltrate Argentina.⁵ The Nazis, who were intent on dominating Europe from within, saw Argentina as part of Europe because of the long ties between the two regions and targeted it accordingly. They bought newspapers, television stations, and various other sources of information dissemination. Using these outlets, Nazis began disseminating propaganda throughout Argentina, using German communities as mobilizing bases. This barrage of propaganda spared none. Propaganda seeped through the messages of the Roman Catholic Church, politicians, industrial workers, labor organizations, university professors, and military personnel: “Anyone who read a newspaper, listened to the radio, or opened his or her mail was in for a barrage of Nazi propaganda.”⁶ Inherent in Nazi messages were nationalism, militarism, and anti-communism.

The Nazi message manifested itself in very powerful social groups as well. These groups included: (1) the NSDAP (the Argentine Nazi party); (2) the Hitler Jugend (Hitler Youth); (3) the Nazi Frauenschaft (Women’s Organizations); (4) the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (Labor Front); and (5) the Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy). . . the SA (Storm Troopers), the SS (Security Troopers), the Deutsche-Argentinische Pfadfinder Korps (Boy Scouts), and the Bund Deutscher Madchen (German Maidens).⁷ These groups had members in various important social sectors of Argentina. They were members of sports clubs, theatre groups, and rec-

reational clubs. These organizations spread party doctrine and kept other members from dissenting. They also infiltrated the Roman Catholic clergy in Argentina. By convincing the clergy that the war was meant to preserve civilization, they began to receive support for their fascist ideology from the Church. The Argentine clergy thus began to adopt anti-democratic stances and to support right-wing fascist measures.

In addition to infiltrating social organizations, Nazis infiltrated government infrastructure. Nazis penetrated the educational system, the military, the bureaucracy, and the individual office. With no sector of society vocally supporting the development of democracy, the Nazis had free reign to indoctrinate the youth of Argentina so that they would support fascism as adults. The more submerged youths were in Nazi rhetoric, the more willing they would be to accept it as adults. In schoolbooks in the 1940s, passages such as the following were written to indoctrinate Argentine youth:

Argentina is a Communist country which we must conquer. Democracy in Argentina is a stupid lie. Every Nazi must fight it and replace it with the blessings of the present regime in Germany.⁸

In addition to schoolchildren, bureaucrats and police were also indoctrinated. Nazis used their social and economic ties to infiltrate police departments and influence government officials. The connection between right-wing fascism and civil and military institutions would only become more pronounced as time passed.

The Rise of Peron and Continued European Influence

While the Germans were steadfastly influencing Argentina from within during World War II, Argentine officers were also being sent abroad to study German and Italian military tactics. One such officer, Col. Juan Domingo Peron, would use the knowledge he gathered in Europe at the dawn of World War II to launch a powerful political movement in Argentina. Juan Peron, like many other Argentines, traced his roots to Europe: his father was an Italian immigrant and he was trained at a German military mission. At this mission, most professors were Germans, and it was during this time that Peron gained a deep appreciation of Germans. In 1938, after

graduating from Argentina's military academy, Peron served on a tour of duty with alpine ski troops in Europe to study the armies of Italy and Germany.⁹ Peron was deeply influenced by the Italian and German armed forces. Their structure and discipline gave him many ideas about how to restructure and further develop the Argentine forces. It also provided him with a chance to forge strong connections with the German and Italian armies.

Peron's tour in Europe greatly influenced his tactical military learning, but, more importantly, it greatly influenced his political leanings. Peron was stationed in Europe at a time when powerful dictators took over disenfranchised societies. During his deployment, he witnessed both Mussolini and Hitler tighten their reigns of power. Both leaders shared similar characteristics that resonated with Peron. They were both great orators, used their charisma to woo crowds, and played various frustrated civilian groups off of one another to control society. Perhaps more importantly, both leaders pitted civilian and military groups against one another so that their constant warring would further consolidate their own power.¹⁰ It is likely that Peron's ideas concerning the character of leadership were formulated based on the images of Hitler and Mussolini. The events that followed Peron's tour in Europe clearly demonstrate that he had studied European leaders carefully, and taken their ideas back to his homeland.

In 1943, Argentina elected Juan Peron to the office of president. He had used tactics that greatly mimicked those of Hitler and Mussolini in gaining office. Soon after assuming office, he staffed his government with loyalists, dismantled the judiciary, and immensely reduced the effectiveness of opposition parties.¹¹ He reduced further civil liberties by suspending the freedom of press, forcing political leaders into exile, gerrymandering, rigging various elections, expanding his secret police (which was based on the German Gestapo), destroying the labor movement (which, ironically, he had used to secure his election), regimenting education, and establishing government-dominated civil society sectors.¹² He also began to systematically employ torture as a method to handle political opposition. Peron may have been freely elected, but by the end of his term, he had clearly become a dictator.

Unlike some of his European counterparts, Peron began to demonstrate political weakness. Over time, his actions, such as legalizing divorce, increasingly isolated the Roman Catholic Church. Once displeased with Peron, it stopped supporting his initiatives. He also replaced officers in the armed forces and reduced the military budget, which infuriated the military and caused unrest. As such, Peron successfully alienated two of the strongest institutions in Argentine society. This frustration led to a military coup in 1955, and Peron lived in exile until he returned to power in 1973.

The Legacy of Peron

Peron may have been forced into exile, but his legacy, heavily laced with remnants of fascist Europe, remained intact. Some of his most influential legacies were the demoralization of the judiciary, the lack of a standing rule of law, a pervasive disrespect for the law and democracy, cowardice in the mass media, and the disorganization and destruction of political parties.¹³ Once the new military government was in place, it seized complete control of the Argentine state and prevented all opposition groups from gaining power. For the next several years, control of the country passed from the hands of one military leader to the next, until Argentina's political landscape was in total disarray. Furthermore, during this time, Peron continued to exert influence from abroad. His exile contributed to his dissatisfaction with the Argentine political climate, and he began to encourage the use of violence as a method of retaking the government. While Peron was busy exerting influence from abroad, the military was maintaining its stronghold on Argentine society. It ousted and replaced Supreme Court members, dissolved the national congress, and sent troops into the universities.¹⁴

Because of the repression of the military and the continuing influence of Peron, various guerilla movements began to emerge. Factory workers, under the influence of Peron, began to band together and strike. They demanded increased political freedoms and a transfer of power to the lower classes. Although their demonstrations were often met with violence, strikes continued and increased in intensity throughout much of the late 1960s and early 1970s.¹⁵ Eventually, the violence became too intense for the constantly fluc-

tuating military governments to control, and an economic crisis resulted from this political instability. The combination of violence and economic turmoil effectively created anarchy and allowed for Peron's return.

During the months before the return of Peron, as well as the few years that followed, several revolutionary organizations began to emerge. The two main factions were the ERP and the Montoneros. The ERP was a merger of members of the PRT (Revolutionary Workers' Party) and the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army); its members believed in Guevarism and Trotskyism, and were strongly Anti-Peronist.¹⁶ The Montoneros represented the militant arm of the Catholic youth in Argentina, and had thousands of supporters in the early 1970s.¹⁷ During this time, the media attributed many kidnappings and assassinations to the ERP and the Montoneros, but in reality, Peron's own advisors instigated them. The ERP and Montoneros had been responsible for only a few random kidnappings.

In the final years of Peron's rule, violence and an absence of law prevailed. The state had begun to organize right-wing terrorist groups, and upon the death of Peron in 1973, his wife Isabel ordered the military to rid the country of all subversives, including any people who merely had left-leaning political ideologies.¹⁸ After a feeble attempt by the ERP to seize a military arsenal, the army began to prepare itself for an intense battle against an already weakened enemy. In 1976, due to a lack of popular support from the people and any semblance of control over the government, the military staged another coup.¹⁹ Argentines initially supported this change because they desperately wanted both peace and a sense of order. They quickly learned that their desire for these things could not be found in the military junta.

The Dirty War and the French Ideology of Warfare

Upon gaining control of the government, the military junta instated a policy known as *El Proceso*, which was planned well in advance, prepared for implementation, and compromised of impressively trained personnel.²⁰ Between 1976 and 1983, the military and police tortured and "disappeared" an estimated 10,000 to 30,000 people. They also burned any books associated with

“subversive thought.” The “disappeared” did not have to commit a crime in order to become a military or police target, they merely had to have some tie to “subversion,” whether it was because they attended a rally, read a certain book, or had their name shouted during a torture session. Actions, thoughts, association with certain family members or friends, or even the wrong clothing, could lead to arrest and death. The military junta launched a war of aggression against its own citizens, and it carried out this aggression through state-sponsored terror.

The mission of this ‘Dirty War’ derived largely from the French experience in Algiers. In Algeria, the French employed various torture tactics to root out “subversives,” and they also developed strategies to train their soldiers in implementing such policies for the maintenance of their colony. The French experience in Algiers provided three essential components to the ideology of the Argentine Dirty War. These components were the holy mission of the soldier, the dehumanized and demonic nature of the enemy, and the inadequacy of the state to deal with the problem of the enemy.²¹ Considering that Argentine society is 92 percent Roman Catholic,²² and that previous governments had used the ideology of the Church to their advantage, it is not odd that a holy mission was necessary to justify the atrocities committed during the Dirty War. In order for soldiers to be compelled to torture human beings in such brutal ways, they needed a strong justification. In situations like this, religion is the best justification: not only does religion provide soldiers with a moral basis for committing atrocities, but it also frees them from guilt and responsibility. Essentially, “the Argentines, reinforced by the French ideology, firmly believed themselves to be the guardians of Mankind.”²³

Once the Argentines believed that they were the defenders of the faith, they needed an enemy, which they found in the form of Argentina’s leftist revolutionary movements. Revolutionaries had committed crimes such as kidnapping and assassination, and thus soldiers were able to cite these actions in justifying the destruction of their movements. Using these actions, the military convinced many sectors of society that Communists were violent and powerful within the country and needed to be suppressed. The soldiers

established their own legitimacy as people, as well as defenders of the faith, in comparing themselves to the demons that they were not.²⁴ These demons could be the armed militant trying to murder a member of the armed forces, or they could be an innocent pregnant woman who attended leftist rallies with a family member.²⁵ As long as the soldier could associate the victim with a subversive cause, it was easy to establish the legitimacy of violent force.

It is evident that the Argentine state failed to protect its citizens, and this inadequacy displays itself in many forms. For decades before the Dirty War, the state had experienced turmoil, which extended to all branches of the government, especially the courts. Corruption and inefficiency ran rampant in Argentina's judicial system, with devastating results. The courts' inefficiency made trying a legitimate revolutionary or criminal nearly impossible. This led to the military setting a precedent of using extrajudicial methods to solve the problem itself. When the Dirty War was under way, the military began staging mock trials. By this time, the courts had been practically dismantled, and even the innocent were unable to attain freedom. This arbitrary judicial system further entrenched the ability of the military to commit atrocities during the Dirty War.

The Cold War and United States Military Assistance

While the United States did not exercise a strong ideological influence over Argentina, it did establish a strong relationship with Argentina's military beginning with the rule of Juan Carlos Onganía's military junta in the late 1960s.²⁶ This stemmed from the perceived similarities between the United States and Argentine governments in fighting Communism. The United States was in the midst of the Cold War, and was preoccupied with combating the spread of Communism. It was particularly concerned with the encroachment of communism in the Western Hemisphere. When Argentina assured the United States that it was combating Marxist subversives within its borders, the United States offered extensive monetary aid and military training to ensure that the government won its battle.

According to Argentina military doctrine, "the confrontation with the Marxist enemy was a boundless war that . . . had to in-

volve a comprehensive political, economic, psychosocial, and military strategy.”²⁷ The United States, keenly aware of the demands of such an extensive war, began orchestrating arms sales and military exchanges in the region, and it became one of the largest sources of funding during the Dirty War. The training it provided was just as extensive. The United States offered its support to the Argentine military at a point in its history when it wanted to destroy the Left at any costs, and continued to do so for the next 15 years. The United States made it very clear to Argentina that “moral and long term political costs [were] less important than security considerations.”²⁸

The United States provided training and funding to the Argentines in several ways. It arranged to have Argentine officers trained at the School of the Americas in Panama, where they were taught tactics such as torture, murder, extortion, and kidnapping.²⁹ They then returned to Argentina to employ all of these tactics. The United States also sent members of the Green Berets to Argentina to train officers in their principles and methodology. This included training which mirrored the teachings of the School of the Americas. In addition to manpower and intelligence, the United States contributed a vast amount of arms to the Argentine military. In 1977 and 1978, at the beginning of the Dirty War, the Department of Defense spent \$700,000 to train 217 Argentine military personnel and sold Argentina over \$120,000,000 worth of spare parts.³⁰ This obviously provided an enormous contribution to the military’s repressive efforts.

The Argentine military combined French ideology with the United States’ military assistance to produce a synergistic effect. In *Nunca Más*, the findings of the truth commission in Argentina, a powerful general in the Argentine army is quoted as saying:

In Argentina we were influenced by the French and then by the United States. We used their methods separately at first and then together . . . France and the United States were our main sources of counter insurgency training. They organized centers for teaching counter insurgency techniques (especially in the US) and set out instructors, observers, and an enormous amount of literature.³¹

This training manifested itself in many forms. The anti-insurgency courses and tactics taught to the officers for dealing with subversives included the application of torture. This torture took a multitude of forms, many of which are described in detail in *Nunca Más*. The most striking methods of torture taught to the Argentines included lessons on how to administer intense beatings, how to apply electric shocks to various sensitive areas of the body, and how to employ psychological torture, rape, the "grill," and "submarino" treatment. Argentine military personnel carried these tactics out in numerous ways. They often beat prisoners severely upon abduction and prior to torture sessions. Broken bones, internal bleeding, and even damaged organs often resulted from these beatings. They applied electric shocks to the genitals, gums, nipples, ears, or any other sensitive areas. Often, they combined these shocks to enhance the effect, and then gave these procedures special names. An example of this is the "telephone" treatment, in which shocks were simultaneously applied to the ears and the gums/teeth of the victim.

Mental torture was just as prevalent as physical torture. Many prisoners expressed that the mental torture was more predominant than all of the other torture methods combined. Military personnel would threaten prisoners with death, deprive them of food, water, and shelter, or make them witness the torture and rape of family members to damage their psychological state. In the testimony of Dr. Norberto Liwsky he explains how incredibly powerful this mental torture was:

The most vivid and terrifying memory I have of all that time was of always living with death. I felt it was impossible to think. I desperately tried to summon up a thought in order to convince myself that I wasn't dead. That I wasn't mad. At the same time, I wished with all my heart that they would kill me as soon as possible.³²

Other examples of methods of psychological torture included burying prisoners alive, blindfolding them, and feeding or waking them at random hours of the day so that their sense of time was distorted.

Along with mental torture, sexual torture was also prevalent. Men and women were systematically raped both by the guards and by metal rods that often had electric currents running through them. Husbands and wives were forced to watch their spouses and children raped. Often, these rapes took place on the “grill,” which was a metal torture table. Once on the grill, prisoners were simultaneously chained, electrocuted, beaten, and raped. One individual’s testimony tells of how the prisoners were sometimes electrocuted so violently on the grill that their chains broke off.³³ Soldiers applied various other torture tactics on the grill. *Submarino* treatment is an example of this. *Submarino* treatment involves prisoners having their heads submerged in a bucket of water long enough for them to come extremely close to drowning, but not long enough for them to actually die. A derivative of *submarino* treatment was dry *submarino* treatment, in which a person’s head was wrapped in plastic and he or she was smothered until on the brink of death.

Using the ideology and tactics of the French and Americans and inspired by the vestiges of Nazi anti-Semitism, the Argentine military systematically sought to destroy the Jewish community in Argentina. Disproportionate amounts of Jewish prisoners were “disappeared.” While only 1 percent of the total population of the country is believed to have been “disappeared,” an estimated 10 percent to 15 percent of the Jewish population was disappeared.³⁴ This data implies that the military equated being Jewish with being subversive. Jewish prisoners described many of their experiences in *Nunca Más*, and it is here that the reader discovers the vast influence of Nazism. One Jewish prisoner described how, after being brutally beaten by guards, they drew swastikas all over his body so that he stood out to the other guards as someone who should be beaten more frequently and violently.³⁵ Guards would also play Hitler’s speeches and make the prisoners yell “Heil Hitler” after hearing them. The walls of many of the secret detention centers (SDCs) were covered in swastikas, and portraits of Hitler were hung in many of the offices and torture chambers. In one of the most graphic descriptions of anti-Semitism, one of the prisoners described a torture specifically applied to Jewish prisoners:

All kinds of torture would be used on the Jews, especially one that was extremely sadistic and cruel: the rectoscope, which consisted of inserting a tube into the victim's anus, or into a woman's vagina, then letting a rat into the tube. The rodent would try to get out by gnawing at the victim's internal organs.³⁶

It is obvious that Nazi Germany continued to strongly influence post-World War II Argentine society.

The Roman Catholic Church's Role in the Repression

The role of the Roman Catholic Church during the repression also contributed greatly to the military's effectiveness. This contribution manifested itself not only in the justifications the Church provided for state-sponsored terror, but also for the salvation it offered to the torturers and masterminds behind the repression. During the Dirty War, bishops often issued statements denying that human rights violations were occurring in Argentina, and that the alleged abuses and atrocities were fictional. They denied that the military played an oppressive role in society, and often supported its efforts. Bishop Victorio Bonamín, one of the most prominent bishops in the country, supported the military struggle on the grounds that it was in defense of moral goodness and faith, and even prayed for divine protection for the Dirty War.³⁷ Throughout all of Argentina, other priests and bishops followed suit in an attempt to convince society to ally with their cause.

During the Dirty War, the Roman Catholic Church viewed the military's efforts as just. Soldiers who were disturbed by the brutal torture that was taking place often sought comfort from Catholic priests, who would typically console them while also simultaneously continuing to dehumanize their enemies. For example, chaplains were often seen comforting Navy officers who had returned from dumping bodies at sea by reading them passages from the Bible which condoned their actions.³⁸ The Church encouraged such officers to drop prisoners from planes and into the ocean because this was a Christian and clement form of death for those who were a danger to society.³⁹ Such actions reinforced the notion that soldiers were righteously defending the nation, while also re-

inforcing that anyone opposed to such actions was a threat to internal order.

Many of the descriptions of priests as comforters to repressive soldiers are even more disturbing. For example, in reference to a group of soldiers beating three people and injecting poisons into their hearts, a soldier described a priest's reaction as follows:

Father Von Werniot saw that what happened had shocked me, and spoke to me telling me that what we had done was necessary: it was a patriotic act and God knew it was for the good of the country. Those were his very words . . . ⁴⁰

Instances such as the one described above are common throughout *Nunca Más*, and they demonstrate that the very people who were entrusted most to protect innocents, the clergy, turned against them in a time of dire need.

Other key testimonies in the report reinforce the role that the Church played. Many prisoners tell about unsuccessful inquiries that family members made to priests and monsignors during their terms of imprisonment. Priests often explained that they knew the whereabouts of the prisoners, but were unable to disclose them. They also often had lists of prisoners' names, and they had usually marked which prisoners were dead and which were alive on the sheet.⁴¹ Many prisoners have testified that priests were present at their torture sessions, or that they had justified the torture to them after witnessing the sessions. In *Nunca Más*, Ernesto Reynaldo Samer offered an explanation given to him by the Bishop of Jujuy, Monsignor Medina. Samer, recounting the Bishop's words, said:

He knew what was going on, but he told me that all that was happening was for the good of the Fatherland, that the military were doing the right thing and that we should tell all we knew and that he was available for confession.⁴²

In some extreme instances, members of the clergy even turned in other members of the clergy to be "disappeared." They helped the military target other priests, nuns, seminarians, and catechists. Priests who opposed these actions condemned them, and claimed

“there was a theological basis that they gave to the military so that they could do these things without feeling guilty.”⁴³

Conclusion

As the case of Argentina clearly demonstrates, domestic policy is not formulated in a vacuum. The transmission of ideas from fascist regimes in Europe, as well as inspiration and aid from France, the United States, and the Roman Catholic Church, resulted in an official policy of state-sponsored terrorism during the “Dirty War.” These influences demonstrate the potential abuses that can arise from the growing interconnectedness of nations, as both foreign military aid and ideological influences enhanced the Argentine military’s ability to launch a concerted effort against “subversives.” Sadly, Argentina is merely one case in which the transmission of ideas has undermined democracy and human rights. Increased international cooperation and globalization have made it much easier to transfer technology and ideas across borders, and the security concerns of one region of the globe increasingly affect other regions. As such, it is critical that the international community recognize weaknesses within institutions that allow both states and non-state transnational actors to encourage and facilitate state-sponsored terror. If it fails to do so, not only will the technological advancements of the past century serve to hinder human development, but also the cycle of innocent people dying at the hands of the very government that was intended to protect them will never be broken.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Robert Jackson Alexander, *Juan Domingo Peron : A History*, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1979), 4.
- ² Patricia Marchak, *God's Assassins: State Terrorism in Argentina in the 1970*, Collab. William Marchak, (Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 47.
- ³ Ibid, 47.
- ⁴ Ibid, 47.
- ⁵ Sax Bradford, *The Battle for Buenos Aires*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, Inc., 1973), 63.
- ⁶ Ibid, 67.
- ⁷ Ibid, 88.
- ⁸ Ibid, 180.
- ⁹ Alexander, 22.
- ¹⁰ Ibid, 23.
- ¹¹ Marchak, 57.
- ¹² Alexander, 55.
- ¹³ Marchak, 62.
- ¹⁴ Ibid, 71.
- ¹⁵ Ibid, 80.
- ¹⁶ Ibid, 91.
- ¹⁷ Ibid, 97.
- ¹⁸ Ibid, 114
- ¹⁹ Ibid, 118.
- ²⁰ Ibid, 180.
- ²¹ Eric Stener Carlson, "The Influence of French 'Revolutionary War' Ideology on the Use of Torture in Argentina's 'Dirty War,'" *Human Rights Review*, No. 1.4 (2000): 71, Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost. Washington College Lib., Chestertown, 20 Apr. 2006 <<http://search.epnet.com>>.
- ²² Freedom House, *Country Report*, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&country=6911&year=2006>.
- ²³ Carlson, 75.
- ²⁴ Carlson, 79.
- ²⁵ According to *Nunca Más*, three percent of those disappeared were pregnant women.

²⁶ Marchak, 71.

²⁷ Ariel C. Armony, *Argentina the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America 1977-1984*, Ohio University Center for International Studies Monographs in International Studies Latin American Series, Number 26, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997), 5.

²⁸ Armony, 8.

²⁹ Marchak, 293.

³⁰ Iain Guest, *Behind the Disappearances: Argentina's Dirty War Against Human Rights and the United Nations*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 166.

³¹ *Nunca Más*, 442.

³² Ibid, 23.

³³ Ibid, 23.

³⁴ Victor A Mirelman, "Attitudes Towards Jews in Argentina," *Jewish Social Studies*, no. 37.3/4, (1975): 210, Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost, Washington College Lib., Chestertown, 20 Apr. 2006 <<http://search.epnet.com>>.

³⁵ *Nunca Más*, 68.

³⁶ Ibid, 72.

³⁷ Marchak, 236.

³⁸ Mark Osiel, "The Mental State of Torturers: Argentina's Dirty War," Ed. Sanford Levinson, *Torture: A Collection*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 132.

³⁹ Armony, 8.

⁴⁰ *Nunca Más*, 248.

⁴¹ Ibid, 249.

⁴² Ibid, 251.

⁴³ Carlson, 27.

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Chiang Kai-shek and the Loss of China

BRIAN TAYLOR

The defeat of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang by Mao Zedong and the Communists following World War II is one of the most stunning reversals in modern world history, and as such has been of great interest to modern historians, who have written on the subject at length. The Chinese Civil War (1945-1949) is of interest to historians for another equally compelling reason: an analysis of Chiang Kai-shek's handling of the conflict and the domestic crises that accompanied its unfolding provides a perfect case study of a leader's failure during a time of crisis. Chiang was a leader who fundamentally misunderstood how to deal with the problems he and his Kuomintang government faced in the spheres of the military, politics, economics, and government. Chiang was not ineffective because he failed to act; rather, his failure stemmed from his implementation of policies that failed to remedy the problems he sought to address. In fact, in many cases his policies had the opposite of their intended effect. It is true that Chiang does not deserve the full blame for the Communist victory, as he certainly faced factors beyond his control and challenges that would have vexed the most capable of leaders. However, Chiang's conduct during the Civil War represents a failure in leadership due to his inability to

enact policies and develop a government and military that could effectively deal with the problems he faced.

If any historical event can be described as inevitable, then certainly the Chinese Civil War fits this description.¹ Following the capitulation of the Japanese at the end of World War II, Communist and Kuomintang forces raced to grab strategic positions for the upcoming conflict.² Although negotiations proceeded for a time with the help of American intervention, there was never much chance of success. In addition to the wide ideological gap between the two camps, the Communists would never be satisfied with participating in government until it became more than simply an extension of the Kuomintang, an eventuality that was promised but seemed increasingly unlikely.³ Another point of contention during the negotiations concerned the positioning of the Communist armies. Chiang demanded that Red armies evacuate the cities of Jehol, Chahar, Harbin, Antung, Tunghwa, Mutankiang, Paicheng, as well as the greater portion of Shandong province and the entirety of Jiangsu province.⁴ The Communists objected strenuously to these demands, and Communist emissary Zhou En-lai described Chiang's proposed terms as a return to the system of military districts, and concluded that, "the demands of the government are thus unacceptable."⁵ Additionally, the supposedly neutral role played by American mediator General George C. Marshall was compromised by the fact that, even as negotiations continued, the United States was providing the Nationalists with military assistance.⁶ By 1947, with talks broken down and the eruption of full scale civil war on the Chinese mainland, a military solution had become inevitable.⁷

Civil war, while certainly unwelcome after years of fighting, did not scare Chiang and the leaders on the Kuomintang, and some anticipated a quick victory as the Nationalists enjoyed many advantages. Government troops were better supplied than Communist forces, and at the beginning of the conflict they outnumbered the Communists by about two million soldiers, boasting a force of approximately three million.⁸ Whereas the Communists lacked an air force and heavy armaments, the Nationalists possessed a small air force and heavy guns.⁹ The Nationalists had also remedied the geographical and tactical disadvantages they faced following the

Japanese capitulation; 53,000 U.S. troops had moved into north China to prevent Soviet takeover of Peking and Tientsin, and U.S. planes and ships had transported entire armies to Manchurian cities and other parts of the north.¹⁰ All signs pointed toward a quick, decisive Kuomintang victory.

What followed was indeed quick and decisive, but it was the Communists who emerged victorious. Kuomintang forces quickly lost the initiative, and the advantages they possessed fell to the Communists, as defecting soldiers brought men and materials to their side.¹¹ This flow of defections brought men and weapons to the Red armies, and Communist military strength had developed to the point that, by 1947, the Communists shifted their strategy from fighting quick, limited, guerrilla-type engagements to seeking out pitched, conventional battles in which they could seek decisive outcomes.¹² In 1948 and 1949, the Communists steamrolled their opposition, winning battle after battle, taking complete control of Manchuria, and crossing the Yangtze River virtually unopposed.¹³ In the fall of 1949, Mao proclaimed the creation of the People's Republic of China, and during the next few months the Communists completed their victory, as the last vestiges of Kuomintang resistance were eliminated and Chiang and some two million supporters were forced to retreat from the mainland and seek shelter in Taiwan.¹⁴

What accounts for this quick Communist victory? Certainly credit must be given to the Communists themselves. Mao and his Red armies waged devastating guerrilla campaigns and, when able, showed the willingness to engage Chiang's troops in large-scale engagements, acquitted themselves with skill. Communist forces concentrated their initial strength in Manchuria and in the north, and isolated Kuomintang troops located in small cities, forcing their capitulation one by one.¹⁵ The Communists were further able to bring the farming populations of northern Chinese villages to their side by implementing land reform measures that neutralized local magnates and landlords and encouraged activism among the ranks of the poor peasants, who could now exercise their influence. A similar process helped the Communists take the northeast: using cadres from north China, local production was organized, villages

were indoctrinated in Communist thought, land reform was enacted, and new conscripts were recruited and trained to take part in the Communist struggle.¹⁶ Indeed, the Communist campaign, both in terms of military success and in its efforts to win support among the Chinese peasantry, was effective and must be given its due as a cause of the Kuomintang's fall.

Granting this, however, much of the blame for the loss of the civil war rests with the poor leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang, the undisputed leader of the Kuomintang, was faced with a series of circumstances which were beyond his power and would have challenged any leader. However, his failure to truly understand the nature of these circumstances and implement successful strategies to deal with them was his main source of failure as a leader, and the Kuomintang's undoing. Chiang recognized that economic crisis, student and elite protest, corruption within the Kuomintang, and the Communist military threat were all problems that needed to be addressed, and worked to do so. He simply failed to do so effectively.

Economic failures, especially the rise of inflation, were important in explaining the failure of Chiang's bid to unite China under the Kuomintang. This rise in inflation, and the protest and unrest it generated, prevented Chiang from exercising viable control over the mainland.¹⁷ Factors that contributed to China's economic woes included problems for Chinese entrepreneurs in regaining their confiscated businesses, unemployment generated by defense industry cutbacks and returning jobless soldiers, problems with redeeming currencies used by the Japanese puppet government, speculation based on regional differences in monetary values, problems with the new currency introduced by Chiang himself, and an insupportable burden created by the tax demands of the civil war on the peasantry.¹⁸ Chiang's response to these problems was simply to print more bank notes, which only compounded the problem of inflation. This economic crisis generated massive protest, especially among industrial workers. In 1946, there were 1,716 strikes and labor disputes in Shanghai alone.¹⁹

Chiang and the Nationalists attempted to stem this tide of inflation and unrest to regain support among the working class and

thereby consolidate their power. In 1947 the Kuomintang devised a plan to offer food and fuel to government employees, school-teachers, students, factory workers, and workers in certain cultural fields.²⁰ This measure was partly successful in that it did lower the cost-of-life index in Shanghai, but it failed to halt inflation, and even an issuance of ration cards to citizens of large towns for necessary foods failed to produce the desired effects.²¹

Sensing the desperation of China's economic situation, Chiang attempted other reforms. In July 1948, he conceived a new plan to replace the *fabi* yuan then in use with gold yuan at the conversion rate of 3 million *fabi* to one gold yuan.²² In August, Chiang used his presidential emergency powers to implement the reform and printed more than 2 million gold yuan to encourage confidence in their worth.²³ Chiang also passed strict enforcement measures, freezing wages, prices, and foreign exchange rates, and prescribing severe penalties for "black marketers."²⁴ Although the plan seemed, for a time, to have a dim chance of succeeding in Shanghai, it ultimately failed, as the better Shanghai fared, the greater the pressure was on Shanghai merchants to do business in other regions, where prices continuously rose. By October 1948, it was clear that the effort had been in vain: the gold yuan had failed, shops were barren of goods, restaurants closed, medical supplies became impossible to procure, and China had devolved, in all practical terms, into a barter economy.²⁵ Chiang's attempts to stem the economic crisis racking his nation were completely ineffective, and even rich city speculators and merchants turned against the Kuomintang, costing his government whatever support it still had.²⁶

Government corruption, while seldom singled out by historians and essayists as the central cause of the Nationalist defeat, was an important factor as well, and one which Chiang failed to eradicate. The basic structure of the Kuomintang government was, as author Suzanne Pepper has written, that "money and favors greased the wheels that made the KMT political system move, ensuring that it moved less effectively."²⁷ The peasantry felt the brunt of government corruption. To name a few of the abuses, government agents collected more in taxes than were due, tax requirements went unchanged in times of natural disaster or famine, peasants had few

options for redress of grievances, government officials gave protection to and profited from gambling and prostitution rings, and peasant families were often given compensation far less than that to which they were entitled.²⁸ This corruption had many important consequences. It alienated liberals and bred resentment among those who were unable or unwilling to participate in the spoils system and saw crooked individuals prosper by their illegitimate enterprises. Corruption demoralized both the bureaucracy and the military and seriously impaired the abilities of either body to function effectively.²⁹ Perhaps most importantly, Kuomintang graft and corruption gave away precious political capital to the Communists, who exerted themselves to prevent corruption and maintain a clean reputation.³⁰

Chiang was not blind to this corruption and recognized that its perpetuation hurt his movement's image, but was ineffective in stemming its tide. No sooner had the post-World War II Nationalist takeover begun than corruption manifested itself. Chiang was alarmed and set up a series of "Generalissimo's letterboxes," in which anonymous complaints against government agents could be made.³¹ Chiang investigated the claims he received, and sent a telegram to the Mayor of Shanghai, saying:

It has been reliably brought to my attention that the military, political, and party officials in Nanking, Shanghai, Peiping, and Tientsin have been leading extravagant lives, indulging in prostitution and gambling, and have forcibly occupied the people's buildings as offices under the assumed names of various party, military, or party organizations. They have resorted to every perverse act.... No culprit is to be harbored by personal favors.³²

This early corrupt activity was a harbinger of things to come. Chiang called for reforms, but few of them were implemented as central and local authorities failed to take concerted action. The Chinese people appreciated Chiang's attempts to fight corruption, but, as one writer put it, "Unfortunately, his subordinates make a great reduction of his efforts. The affairs of the nation cannot rely entirely on one Generalissimo and the good people."³³

While the Civil War raged, Chiang attempted to remedy the rot at the core of his movement. He was scathing in his speeches to subordinates. In a January 1948 speech to Kuomintang members, he railed that, "To tell the truth, never, in China or abroad, has there been a revolutionary party as decrepit and degenerate as we are today."³⁴ Chiang went on to accuse his party of lacking spirit, discipline, and a sense of moral judgment.³⁵ Nothing Chiang did or said, however, seemed to have an effect. The corruption that plagued the Kuomintang only deepened, lowering its level of legitimacy while making the Communists seem more appealing. In dealing with corruption, Chiang cannot be faulted for his intentions; his actions were simply inadequate.

Likewise, Chiang failed to effectively understand the nature of student demonstrations and drove many otherwise neutral students into the Communist camp. Student protests were a nagging problem for the Kuomintang during the Civil War years. Students participated in a vast array of protests and strikes, and beyond these isolated incidents, four major movements drew national attention to Civil War issues. The 1945 December First movement was the earliest such mass protest and it was followed by similar protests in December 1946 and early 1947. An Anti-Hunger Anti-Civil War movement in May and June of 1947 was born in universities and middle schools in government-controlled cities.³⁶ The last great movement occurred in April and June of 1948, when the Anti-Oppression Anti-Hunger Movement merged with the Movement to Protest American Support of Japan. Protest was also generated in response to the violent conduct of U.S. service personnel in China, a movement which referred specifically to the alleged rape of a Peking student by two American soldiers.³⁷ These movements were widespread and sincere and made the same basic demands: a cessation of hostilities, a focus on civilian development, and an end to Kuomintang reliance on U.S. support.³⁸

Although student protests certainly expressed discontent with the existence of civil war and certain Kuomintang policies, there is no evidence that student movements sought the formation of a

Communist government. The harsh, repressive response they generated from both Chiang and the Kuomintang, however, drove many students into the Communist camp.³⁹ Chiang came down hard on these movements for two reasons. The first was that he would not tolerate public opposition to his civil war policy. The second was that the students' demands for a coalition government implicitly recognized the legitimacy of the Communist party, and this was something Chiang and the Kuomintang were not willing to countenance.⁴⁰ The Nationalists thus treated these movements as Communist-inspired and infiltrated, and they dealt with them in ever-harsher ways: intimidation and violence, often in the form of brutal beatings or killings, were common methods.⁴¹ One such example of Kuomintang repression occurred at a rally in Peiping, where Nationalist troops fired on a crowd of 3,000 student protestors, killing several.⁴²

Chiang's failure was that he was not able to grasp the subtleties of the student movements and realize that they were more about the attainment of peace and general reform than a preference of one party over another.⁴³ So while the Communists employed a strategy of appealing to diverse elements of society so as to create, in Mao's words, "the broadest united front of the overwhelming majority of the population," the Nationalists were alienating many potential supporters and neutrals by brutally suppressing general reform movements. Jack Belden has written that this shift in student opinion was critical to the unfolding of events: "The students' role in both crippling the Kuomintang and bolstering the strength of the Communists can hardly be overestimated...Thousands who migrated from the Kuomintang regions...furnished much-needed brains to the slender ranks of the Communist party."⁴⁴ At a time when the Communists were gaining popular support, this was political support the Kuomintang could not afford to lose, and the central government in Nanking, most specifically Chiang himself, was responsible for the "style and substance" of the official response to these protests.⁴⁵

Chiang and the Nationalists similarly failed to respond appropriately to elite discontent, and as a result they alienated a large portion of this population as well. Liberal intellectuals thought the

Civil War too high a price to pay simply to preserve the existing corrupt government. They further believed that neither side possessed the resources to decisively defeat the other, and that as a result the war would drag on indefinitely.⁴⁶ The result was an outbreak of protest among elites and intellectuals, especially university professors. During the early stages of the Civil War, university professors responded negatively to the mere existence of a state of war. Professors, just as their students, joined in “widespread agitation for domestic peace and against civil war,” and while the Communists catered to this growing discontent, the Kuomintang responded with force, meeting demonstrations with violence.⁴⁷

Intimidation and assassination were employed as means of breaking protests. One notorious event occurred in 1946, when in Kunming a Tsing Hua professor named Wen I-to was killed by government forces.⁴⁸ Wen, who had been an outspoken advocate of reform, was shot in front of his faculty dormitory while returning from a Democratic League meeting. Four days later, another known member of the league, Li Kung-pu, was gunned down under similar circumstances.⁴⁹ Investigations performed on behalf of the Democratic League found that the killings had been carried out with the knowledge, if not consent, of local government agents. This and other less drastic incidents were not forgotten by the academic community and “were regularly cited thereafter to exemplify the oppressive climate fostered by KMT rule.”⁵⁰

This oppression was part of a larger trend of the Kuomintang injecting its politics into the world of education.⁵¹ This was a policy meant to ensure that students were indoctrinated with republican ideals and became Nationalist supporters. It backfired severely, as professors balked at such government interference, flocked to the Communist side, and took many of their students with them. The government and Kuomintang party continually broke with the liberal ideal, which held that government interference within education should not go beyond bare necessity and that partisan political posturing should not be present whatsoever. The Kuomintang attempted to place activists among student populations to recruit for its youth organizations, to interfere with the substance of school curricula, and to silence critics in the academic arena.⁵² This strat-

egy played directly into the hands of the Communists. Just as they had with the student population, the Nationalists alienated potential supporters, driving them into the Communist camp where their views would be accepted.

Chiang's domestic and economic failures were compounded by his military failures, as both a commander and tactician. Indeed, his decisions offered so little evidence of being part of a coherent strategy that he was, at one point, asked by an American official if he had a strategy at all. Chiang did have a strategy, but it was atrocious and based on a desire to "defend everything, everywhere and all the time."⁵³ He stuck stubbornly to a plan of seizing cities and maintaining them as bases of power, even when Communist forces boasted such great strength in the countryside surrounding those cities that his troops were dependent on airlifting efforts for supplies. His strategy had more to do with maintaining symbolic power by capturing capital cities than it did with securing real military advantages, and John King Fairbank has written that Chiang "[dug] his own grave by his outdated masterminding of the civil war."⁵⁴

Chiang habitually failed to take the advice of competent strategists. One especially harmful display of this tendency came in 1948 when, against the advice of his staff and American advisers, he massed more than fifty divisions around Hsueh-chang to prevent Communist forces from dominating central China. The result was a complete disaster in which 550,000 Nationalist soldiers were lost, an estimated 325,000 as prisoners.⁵⁵ He further erred in his decision, again against the advice of his advisers, to concentrate large troop levels in Manchuria. His objective was to take the industrially productive region and cripple the Communists, but Communist guerrilla strength was strong in the countryside and Communist forces controlled many of the communication and supply lines that linked Manchuria with the rest of China.⁵⁶ He liked to direct battles and make decisions via telephone and would, from time to time, forget to tell his staff what he was doing.⁵⁷ He would issue orders in the evening to be carried out the next day, which were often out of date by the time they reached field commanders.⁵⁸ Indeed, Chiang's "total defeat in the civil war was the graveyard of his military reputation."⁵⁹

This apparent lack of strategic skill is confusing, as Chiang had, prior to the Civil War, conducted successful military campaigns, most notably the Northern Expedition in the late 1920s. Upon analysis of Chiang's success in this endeavor, however, it becomes evident that his field military strategy was not a terribly decisive factor. Chiang used advance propaganda, general political agitation, and bribery, and these in large part accounted for his ability to defeat or absorb the armies of local warlords.⁶⁰ As his armies moved north to confront the warlords one by one, Chiang remained behind to focus on tasks such as diplomacy, political maneuvering, control of finance and organization, and bribery. The field orders he did issue were almost always written by a Russian military adviser who remarked, "He does not make a single decision without my approval."⁶¹ Furthermore, Chiang enjoyed the benefit of a feeling among the peasantry that his movement would fight against imperialism, promote unity, and bring an end to local landlord control. During the Civil War, however, it was the Communist movement that the peasants believed would bring these types of changes.⁶² It thus appears that this success was due more to Chiang's political maneuvering than to his own field strategy, which makes Chiang's failure as strategist in the Civil War easier to understand.

In addition to his strategical shortcomings, Chiang chose his generals more on the basis of personal loyalty to himself than out of any consideration of skill or personal merit. He also failed to use the superiority granted to him by the existence of his air force, a weapon which the Communists did not possess. Chiang mishandled the appointing and assigning of command positions, basing his decisions on his generals' perceived loyalty to his leadership, rather than military skill.⁶³ Some of Chiang's more able tacticians found themselves relieved of command or buried at lower levels without access to decision-making, while incompetent but fiercely loyal generals, "men of no conspicuous ability," made the decisions.⁶⁴ One especially conspicuous example was Chiang's appointing of Du Yuming, an incompetent, corrupt, but loyal general, to command in Manchuria. Unskilled generals like Du created confusion and brought on defeat through their inability to handle large forces.⁶⁵ Hand-in-hand with poor leadership went poor decision-making,

and this was typified by the squandering of air superiority. Bombing raids were attempted on a few separate occasions, but bombs were dropped from such high altitudes, and with so little regard for targets, that the raids were rendered totally ineffective.⁶⁶

Other military problems plagued the Nationalist effort. The rate of officer turnover was high, and as such there was little chance for any sort of continuity of command to develop. Furthermore, many officers refused to cooperate with their colleagues, and some government commanders paid little or no attention to vital logistical concerns such as the distribution of food, weapons, and ammunition or the procurement of basic medical services.⁶⁷ To compound the problem, Chiang's officers suffered moral and spiritual shortcomings: they were prideful, selfish, and unwilling to cooperate amongst each other. Chiang was unrelentingly critical of his officer corps, and while his criticism must be closely scrutinized, it is still instructive of its shortcomings. He accused his high-level officers of complacency, acting like warlords, being concerned only with their own military strength and resources, and lacking in revolutionary spirit.⁶⁸ "Everyone nourishes the evil habit of caring only for himself and is only concerned for the advantage of his own unit," Chiang complained on one occasion, and added, "towards the perils and difficulties of other troops, or the success or peril of the whole campaign, they give almost no thought."⁶⁹ Additionally, Chiang's officers falsified battle reports, troop numbers, and supply reports, fought among each other for glory upon victory, and pointed at each other in defeat. Indeed, Chiang observed, "If we are defeated in battle, then they are mutually resentful and criticize each other, but they completely conceal their own errors, absolving themselves completely of responsibility for the defeat."⁷⁰

The rank and file of the Kuomintang forces was no better off than its leadership. The conditions in the Kuomintang's military camps following the Japanese defeat have been described as "deplorable." Soldiers received little or no training, were poorly fed and equipped, were underpaid, and had a dim or nonexistent sense of the reasons for which they fought. Many soldiers thus had no motivation to fight, and their reluctance to do battle was only reinforced by the extreme defensive posture of their commanders, who,

rather than engage the enemy, preferred to fire at the enemy from behind fortifications and city walls while waiting for reinforcements that usually failed to arrive.⁷¹ These problems bred low morale, and the Nationalists' fighting capacity suffered substantially: "With the discipline of our troops so lax and moral so low, there is absolutely no way that we can luckily avoid defeat when we do battle with the tough and tricky communist army," Chiang himself once observed.⁷² These conditions among his troops, when coupled with incompetent, stubborn commanders and officers, left Chiang with an inefficient and ineffective fighting force, and one that was prone to desertions and defections.

Defections, men simply deserting or, in many cases, actually joining Communist armies, became a huge concern for Chiang and the Nationalists. Commenting on the Communist victory, Jack Belden wrote that the "unique feature of this movement as a war was that it triumphed on the battlefield not only through combat but through insurrections within Chiang's army."⁷³ It was not political activity or subversion on the part of the Communists that inspired the majority of deserters; rather, it was contact on the battlefield. In what is referred to as "one of the more ludicrous phenomena of the Chinese war," the more Chiang fought the Communists on the battlefield, the more soldiers he lost to the appeal of the Communist side.⁷⁴ Most of Chiang's soldiers were peasants, of the same stock that Mao and the Communists so effectively recruited, and were themselves susceptible to the appeal of Communist policies and the feeling that they gained nothing by fighting for the Kuomintang.⁷⁵ To encourage defections, shouting campaigns hurled Communist slogans across no-man's land, propaganda bombs filled with leaflets were thrown across Kuomintang lines, propaganda barges were floated down rivers, and Communist slogans even appeared on Kuomintang pillboxes. These tactics were extremely effective; in Changchun alone in 1948, during a period of just a few weeks, 13,000 soldiers deserted to the Communist side, including 16 colonels and 282 officers ranking higher than lieutenant. All brought weapons, some brought radio equipment, and most turned around to fight against the Kuomintang.⁷⁶ These types of desertions sapped strength from the already weakened Kuomintang armies, further

emboldened the Communists, and helped them make the final assaults that would bring about Chiang's unseating.

Not all military failures had to do with the actual fighting of the war. Chiang's conscription program was immensely unpopular and caused much unrest. In theory, it was designed to ensure that participation in the fighting was spread equally among all social classes. Unfortunately, the opposite was achieved, as wealthy citizens were able to buy their way out of military service, and the poor were left to fend for themselves. Irregularities in recruiting practice were everywhere, owing to a lack of manpower, monetary support, and adequate planning.⁷⁷ This corrupt recruiting system produced an unwillingness to fight among the peasantry, and it certainly did not bode well for the Kuomintang. A Sian newspaper discussed the three central factors behind this reluctance to fight: the inequality of the process itself, in which money was often the deciding factor; the poor treatment of inducted recruits; and government indifference to soldiers' families, left to fend for themselves.⁷⁸ Thus, although the program did not arouse outright opposition to the Kuomintang, it did generate bad feeling and was another popular grievance which the Communists could easily exploit.

Beyond these particular issues, blame must simply be placed on some of Chiang's personal characteristics that made him a poor leader. Many have commented that he lacked the ability and tactical knowledge to unify China. After the Japanese defeat in 1945, Chiang was revered throughout much of China and seemed to have been handed a new lease on his dream of uniting China under Kuomintang rule. Chiang, however, was a man of limited educational background, and "one for whom leadership did not require familiarity with the way in which governments worked or close cooperation with talented individuals."⁷⁹ Furthermore, Chiang preferred to surround himself with mediocre advisers, fearing the emergence of potential rivals, and was prone to periods of inaccessibility that lasted for weeks at a time. Chiang has been described by Jack Belden, a witness to the Chinese Civil War, as at turns "unstable," "treacherous," and "a servant of foreign nations," as well as one who used "intrigue, treachery, blackmail, and terror" to first attain and then maintain power.⁸⁰

These character flaws were indeed serious, but even they might not have proved fatal to his movement had his plan for uniting China been more practical. Chiang's politics were based on a mix of the teachings of Sun Yat-sen, traditional Chinese authoritarianism, and the moral guidelines of Confucianism. He advocated republicanism and revolutionary change but employed the tools of despotism to consolidate his power and refused to accept that social upheaval would have to occur for the radical changes he envisioned in fields such as education, the economy, and governmental affairs.⁸¹ Chiang's dictatorial rule convinced many peasants that he had abandoned altogether Sun's Three Principles of nationalism, democracy, and the people's welfare, and left him susceptible to charges that he catered to Western culture and had allowed the Communists and U.S. to fight the Japanese during the Second World War. Indeed, by the time of the Civil War, the Kuomintang was "essentially a conservative military dictatorship...functioning to preserve rather than reduce basic inequalities in the socioeconomic system."⁸² Chiang was a tragic figure, wrote Belden, one who tried to do the impossible: "He attempted to create capitalism through feudalism, Christianity through Confucianism, democracy through despotism, nationalism through chauvinism. In the end, he created only chaos."⁸³ So it was that Chiang's failures were partially explainable through not only analysis of his personal qualities, but of the extent to which his methods for unification were unrealistic.

Clearly, it would be an overstatement to say that Chiang was fully responsible for the collapse of Kuomintang power in mainland China. He can not be charged with creating the economic crisis, the rise in student and elite protest, the existence of corruption within the Kuomintang, or the Communist military threat. The emergence of these problems was largely beyond his control, at least by the Civil War years. Additionally, the Communists must be given credit for their military successes and their ability to capture the imagination of the peasantry and a good portion of the upper classes. These points being granted, the inability of Chiang Kai-shek to develop policies to deal effectively with the problems faced by his regime bears a large amount of responsibility for the Kuomintang fall.

Chiang's efforts to combat these problems simply did not work, and to a large extent he did not understand their nature. His economic reforms did nothing to correct the inflation that decimated China's financial sector; in fact, they worsened the situation, and led to the erosion of whatever support Chiang still had. Despite good intentions, he was unable to stay the corruption, greed, and moral decay that infested his government and party. He mistook the sincere yearning of students and intellectuals for peace and domestic development for Communist-inspired plots, and in his repression of protest movements drove many Chinese towards Communism. He employed an antiquated military strategy, allowed incompetent, feuding officers to dominate his military, neglected his rank and file, and enacted an ineffective and alienating conscription program. All of these policies, and their outcomes, represent the failure of a leader to perform a task which is integral to the effective administration of a country during a time of conflict: to identify not the only the problems that must be remedied, but to further identify the proper ways in which to do so.

So how much blame does Chiang Kai-shek deserve for the loss of China? There is no empirical way in this case to assign blame, to develop a tangible representation of Chiang's level of culpability or the inadequacy of his leadership. That he failed as a leader is obvious. The circumstances and external forces beyond his control serve as partial explanations, not excuses, for his failure. In the final analysis, Chiang was a sincere and dedicated leader who was given one last chance at unifying China. The tragedy of Chiang's figure and the reason for his failure as leader was that, given this opportunity, he was unable to truly grasp the essence of the problems he faced, and as a result, lost China to the Communists.

ENDNOTES

¹ James E Sheridan. *China in Disintegration: The Republican Era in Chinese History, 1912-1949*. (New York and London: The Free Press and Collier Macmillan, 1975), 269.

² Sheridan, 269.

³ Sheridan, 270.

⁴ Lionel Max Chassin. *The Communist Conquest of China: A History of the Civil War 1945-1949*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1965), 83.

⁵ Chassin, 83.

⁶ Edward J. Lazzerini. *The Chinese Revolution*. (Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood, 1999), 20.

⁷ Sheridan, 270.

⁸ Sheridan, 270, Albert M. Craig., John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer. *East Asia: The Modern Transformation*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 856.

⁹ Sheridan, 270.

¹⁰ John King Fairbank. *The Great Chinese Revolution: 1800-1985*. (Cambridge, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Washington, London, Mexico City, Sao Paulo, Singapore, and Sydney: Harper & Row, 1986), 265.

¹¹ Sheridan, 271.

¹² Robert Goldston. *The Rise of Red China*. (Indianapolis, Kansas City, and New York: Bobbs-Merill, 1967), 208-09.

¹³ Sheridan, 271.

¹⁴ Sheridan, 271.

¹⁵ Goldston, 209.

¹⁶ Fairbank, 265.

¹⁷ Jonathan D. Spence. *The Search for Modern China: Second Edition*. (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1999), 474.

¹⁸ Spence, 474, Suzanne Pepper. *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle 1945-1949*. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 160.

¹⁹ Spence, 474.

²⁰ Spence, 477.

²¹ Spence, 477.

²² Chassin, 200.

²³ Spence, 477.

²⁴ Chassin, 200.

²⁵ Spence, 479-80.

²⁶ Goldston, 210.

²⁷ Pepper, 147.

²⁸ Pepper 148-50.

²⁹ Pepper, 147.

³⁰ Pepper, 147.

³¹ Pepper, 20.

³² Pepper, 20.

³³ Pepper, 20-21.

³⁴ Lloyd E. Eastman. 1981. Who Lost China? Chiang Kai-shek Testifies. (*The China Quarterly*. 88: 658-668), 658.

³⁵ Eastman, 658.

³⁶ Pepper, 42.

³⁷ Sheridan, 276.

³⁸ Fairbank, 264.

³⁹ Sheridan, 277.

⁴⁰ Pepper, 43.

⁴¹ Pepper, 48-9.

⁴² Jonathan Fenby. *Chiang Kai-shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost*. (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2004), 474.

⁴³ Pepper, 92.

⁴⁴ Jack Belden. *China Shakes the World*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 406.

⁴⁵ Pepper, 92-3.

⁴⁶ Pepper, 159.

⁴⁷ Craig et al., 859.

⁴⁸ Craig et al., 859.

⁴⁹ Pepper, 143.

⁵⁰ Pepper, 144.

⁵¹ Pepper, 145.

⁵² Pepper, 143.

⁵³ Brian Crozier. *The Man Who Lost China*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 398.

⁵⁴ Fairbank, 262.

⁵⁵ Goldston, 214.

⁵⁶ Lazzerini, 19.

⁵⁷ Sheridan, 272.

⁵⁸ Fenby, 475.

⁵⁹ Crozier, 398.

⁶⁰ Fairbank, 215.

⁶¹ Fenby, 117-18.

⁶² Goldston, 106.

⁶³ Fenby, 475.

⁶⁴ F.F. Liu. "Defeat by Military Default", ed. Pichon Pei Yung Loh, *The Kuomintang Debacle of 1949: Collapse or Conquest?*, (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1965), 8-10.

⁶⁵ Fenby, 475.

⁶⁶ Sheridan, 272.

⁶⁷ Sheridan, 272.

⁶⁸ Eastman, 660.

⁶⁹ Eastman, 660.

⁷⁰ Eastman, 660.

⁷¹ Sheridan, 273.

⁷² Eastman, 660.

⁷³ Belden, 415.

⁷⁴ Belden, 415.

⁷⁵ Goldston, 209.

⁷⁶ Belden, 416-417

⁷⁷ Pepper, 163.

⁷⁸ Pepper, 163.

⁷⁹ Graham Hutchings. *Modern China*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 63.

⁸⁰ Belden, 426-28.

⁸¹ Hutchings, 63.

⁸² James DeFronzo. *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements: Second Edition*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 94.

⁸³ Belden, 425.

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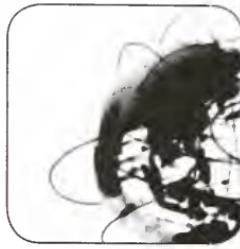
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South Africa's Nuclear Weapons Program: A Global Concern

GILLIAN BOURASSA

Cold War security threats, particularly nuclear proliferation and the expansion of weapons of mass destruction, remain a reality in the post-Cold War world. Western concerns about the use of nuclear weapons are significant components of foreign policy and contribute to the present conflicts surrounding the so-called “Axis of Evil” of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. More general concerns about how all countries, in both the developed and developing worlds, create and maintain nuclear arsenals have been important considerations for world leaders since the first atomic weapons were developed and used during World War II. Many nations feel that the added security nuclear weapons provide justify the creation of such weapons, yet these developments have the opposite effect and decrease overall global security.

South Africa's nuclear program failed to receive the attention that the nuclear programs of other countries have. The country's nuclear program was generally only mentioned in the context of India, Israel, West Germany, or Japan, nations that were “prime contenders for nuclear power status.”¹ Analysis and discussion of South Africa's development of weapons of mass destruction deserves equal attention since South Africa is an important producer

of uranium, and in 1978, was considered to have the most advanced nuclear program in Africa.² The country was, in the words of scholars Zdenek Červenka and Barbara Rogers, a “threat to nonproliferation” for two reasons: it valued “politically advantageous deals” over nonproliferation, and its resources were not subject to inspection, helping to illustrate “how quickly, quietly, and relatively cheaply nuclear weapons can be acquired.”³ Although there were several compelling reasons as to why South Africa would consider it necessary to develop nuclear weapons, the country’s build-up and testing of nuclear weapons during the 1970s and 1980s was a problem for the outside world in many ways. South Africa’s nuclear program was surrounded by ambiguity, and it was unclear whether the nation possessed nuclear weapons. Both Western nations and so-called “pariah” states aided South Africa in enhancing the nation’s nuclear technology in return for South African uranium. Finally, political developments in southern Africa, and in the outside world, put South Africa in an increasingly volatile situation in which the South African government felt the use of a nuclear weapon might be the only viable response.

South Africa’s nuclear program began in 1948 when the government established the Atomic Energy Corporation to “assess the uranium reserves in southern Africa” and passed the Atomic Energy Act, which granted a monopoly to the government on the mining and production of uranium and thorium, and in 1949, when the government created the Atomic Energy Board.⁴ Great Britain and the United States pursued South African uranium for use in their own nuclear programs during the 1940s and 1950s, and in return assisted nuclear development programs in South Africa. The US Atomic Energy Commission began working with South Africa in 1957 to help develop the South African nuclear program.⁵ In 1961, South Africa purchased a light water reactor from the United States that became known as the South African Fundamental Atomic Reactor Installation (Safari). This reactor became operational in 1965 and was later joined by the South African-built Safari-II reactor, which remained in use until 1970.⁶ At this point, South Africa was still some time away from constructing a nuclear weapon, but defense spending was on the increase during the early 1960s and again

in the mid-1970s.⁷ In 1965, Andreis Visser, a member of the Atomic Energy Board, supported the construction of an atomic bomb and stated that “money is no problem,” despite the fact that production of one nuclear weapon would require a quarter of the country’s defense budget.⁸ This attitude demonstrated South Africa’s commitment to developing nuclear technology and nuclear weapons even though extreme costs were involved.

South Africa’s nuclear program developed rapidly during the 1970s. In July 1970, Prime Minister Vorster announced that the Atomic Energy Board had developed a new process for uranium enrichment, which would lead to increased uranium exports and would continue the development of the nuclear program.⁹ A uranium enrichment plant was built at Velindaba with the aid of American and West German technology and began operating in 1975. Velindaba was South Africa’s second research center, as the first research center at Pelindaba housed the two Safari reactors and other equipment. These centers marked the end of “physical barriers to indigenous production” of fissionable materials.¹⁰ Prime Minister Vorster allowed research into “peaceful uses” of nuclear technology, and South Africa built a light water reactor at Koeburg in the early 1970s to generate electricity while the government funded a test site in the Kalahari Desert.¹¹ Throughout the 1970s, Great Britain helped South Africa develop the means to produce uranium hexafluoride, an important compound in the uranium enrichment process.¹²

South Africa had produced its first nuclear device by 1977, the same year that a voluntary United Nations arms embargo became mandatory.¹³ In August of that year, South Africa, with the assistance of Israel, prepared to test an atomic device, believing that there would be no long-term political consequences or “international outrage” despite warnings from the U.S. and European governments “of the damage a test would do to its relations with the West.”¹⁴ Eventually, the test was cancelled due to pressure exerted on the South African government from the United States, the Soviet Union, France, and Britain. In 1978, the United States passed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act and ended American fuel supplies for Safari-I, causing the South African government to view the Unit-

ed States as unreliable and forcing South Africa to acquire fuel from Europe or through domestic methods of production.¹⁵ Two flashes were detected off the South African coast in 1979 and 1980, one of which may have been from a bomb detonated by Israel and South Africa. South Africa denied testing a nuclear weapon, and there was still some uncertainty as to whether the flashes were nuclear tests. Possible explanations included a meteoroid crash, an explosion of a missile that landed in the area in 1963, and an accident aboard a Russian submarine.¹⁶

Many observers believed in South Africa's ability to build nuclear weapons. In 1979, Richard Betts wrote that South Africa had the nuclear capability to "build a bomb at any time it wishes," while Zdenek Červenka and Barbara Rogers wrote in 1978 that South Africa had the ability in the mid-1970s to build weapons, and that the Soviet Union, France, the United States, and West Germany believed that South Africa was producing weapons.¹⁷ Meanwhile, South Africa was modernizing its military throughout the 1970s in order to improve its ability to respond to and prevent guerilla attacks from neighboring countries.¹⁸ South Africa's nuclear program continued to develop during the 1980s, but ended when F. W. de Klerk became President in 1989. de Klerk began destroying weapons in 1990 and worked toward acceptance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which South Africa signed in 1991.¹⁹ South Africa also signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in the late 1990s, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to inspect weapons-grade uranium that was produced during the 1970s and 1980s.²⁰

It is important to consider the powerful economic, diplomatic and security reasons for South Africa's nuclear program. The South African government hoped that the country could become a major exporter of enriched uranium, as it ranked third in the world in uranium production in 1978, and thought that the development of nuclear weapons would give the white South African public a morale boost.²¹ South Africa saw the opportunity to sell uranium to countries that could not, or would not, meet restrictions imposed by other uranium-producing nations, despite the likelihood that South African production costs would be higher than those of the United

States or other nations.²² Electricity production was also a consideration, as Great Britain intended for South Africa to use nuclear technology to generate electricity, since South Africa lacked its own oil reserves, sought to conserve coal, was at risk for economic sanctions, and was targeted in the 1973 OPEC oil embargo,²³ making nuclear power seem like an effective alternative.

Diplomatic and security concerns also contributed to the continuation of South Africa's weapons program. Richard Betts described the "diplomatic bargaining power" that South Africa might gain because of its uranium reserves and its ability to enrich uranium in the context of the energy crises of the 1970s, while J. E. Spence commented that the government might think that the nuclear program itself would bring greater world respect to South Africa as well as introduce the possibilities of an alliance with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and greater leverage in negotiations. This would force the world to include, rather than exclude, South Africa as "a maverick nuclear state is better constrained within an alliance framework than outside it."²⁴ This, however, was not the reality that South Africa experienced. The United Nations imposed an arms embargo in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and European and American involvement in South Africa declined again during the late 1970s. The United States stopped supplying fuel for Safari-I in 1978. These events caused the South African government to feel isolated from the West as it was simultaneously facing greater threats from hostile neighbors, the black majority within South Africa, and the influence of the Soviet Union in southern Africa. These factors contributed to the feeling within South Africa that the nation would need greater, more powerful weapons in order to defend itself.²⁵

Despite the advantages, real or perceived, that nuclear weapons would bring to South Africa, there were several reasons why the development of nuclear weapons was a cause for concern. While South Africa seemed to value ties to the West, the development of nuclear weapons, in light of the world's general attitude supporting nonproliferation, strained South Africa's relationship with Western countries.²⁶ Nuclear development would also complicate Western policy in other African nations, as a US alliance with the apartheid

government of South Africa would increase tension in Africa and further divide Africa along the Cold War lines of East and West.²⁷ The presence of nuclear weapons in South Africa might have caused other African nations to seek Soviet support, or even to build nuclear weapons of their own, thereby expanding the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean and fueling an arms race within Africa.²⁸ Any conflict in the region exacerbated by South Africa's nuclear arsenal threatened Western shipping around the Cape of Good Hope, while attacks on the Soviet Union or one of its allies from South Africa might draw NATO into conflict with the Soviet Union,²⁹ starting the global war that the world sought to avoid during the Cold War years. Finally, South Africa's conventional military power was strong enough to confront threats to the country, especially considering its geography and its relative strength in southern Africa, making nuclear weapons useless except as an "incalculably reckless" way of gaining leverage over neighbors, internal threats, and guerilla campaigns.³⁰

South Africa's ambiguous public approach to its nuclear program also contributed to concerns about the program. South Africa originally supported the Non-Proliferation Treaty when it was introduced in 1968,³¹ but the nation did not sign it until 1991. During the 1970s and 1980s, the government refused to sign for several reasons. One motivation for this action may have been concern for South Africa's ability to continue pursuing peaceful uses of nuclear weapons, as the government feared external safeguards would be a threat to enrichment technology or the gold industry.³² Prime Minister Vorster stated in 1970 that South Africa would decide whether to sign the Treaty after the announcement of new IAEA safeguards because of concerns about preservation of secrecy, yet South Africa was willing to accept safeguards on the plant at Pelindaba as long as such safeguards did not interfere with the country's ability to pursue "peaceful uses of nuclear technology."³³ However, the Treaty contained requirements against the development of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear states, prevented such states from looking for assistance in developing nuclear weapons, and also mandated that nuclear powers withhold material and equipment from non-nuclear states unless certain precautions were taken.³⁴ These

obligations may have been another factor in the government's decision to postpone signing the treaty. The Republic also opposed a United Nations resolution in 1972 calling nations to abandon the use of all weapons, including nuclear, further calling into question the government's policies on proliferation.³⁵

Cryptic government statements on matters regarding nuclear development also contributed to global uncertainty about the status of South Africa's nuclear program. When the first research reactor opened in 1965, Prime Minister Verwoerd stated that the South African government had a "duty" to "consider" the military uses of nuclear material," while A. J. A. Roux, President of the Atomic Energy Board, worked to minimize discussion of weapons development and made assurances that South Africa was only interested in peaceful ways to use uranium.³⁶ In the wake of the 1977 nuclear test, Prime Minister Vorster denied President Carter's claim that South Africa "assured the United States that it would not develop or test nuclear weapons in the future," despite the existence of a letter stating the intentions Carter cited.³⁷ In addition to this contradictory message, Prime Minister Vorster allowed research into "peaceful uses" of nuclear technology, and made an even more mysterious statement in 1976: "We are only interested in peaceful applications of nuclear power. But we can enrich uranium and we have the capability. And we did not sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty."³⁸ Scholars have differing interpretations of this statement. J. E. Spence called it a sign of "calculated ambiguity about the government's ultimate intentions," while J. D. L. Moore described South Africa's claim that this statement was taken out of context, and suggested that South Africa would not make any open declarations of nuclear capability out of fear of Western condemnation unless its situation was desperate enough and Western assistance seemed improbable.³⁹

Ambiguity was also apparent in the contradictory and varied explanations of the so-called "double flash" in 1979. The South African government gradually developed a policy against "allowing South African uranium to be used to expand the number of nuclear weapon states," a position that Moore saw as ambiguous because it permitted uranium sales to nations such as France and Britain,

but did not mention Israel and other states with secret nuclear programs.⁴⁰ The constant ambiguity and uncertainty of these statements gave South Africa some leverage in its foreign relations,⁴¹ but did not serve to quell fears of nuclear weapons development in South Africa. Instead, they served to exacerbate the tension between South Africa and the major Western powers through inefficient and veiled communication that left the West wondering about the true intentions of South African policymakers.

South Africa's nuclear program was also a matter of concern because many different nations were involved in the development of the program. Israel was one of South Africa's major partners in nuclear technology. Both Israel and South Africa were isolated by their neighbors; in 1968, an Afrikaner newspaper published an article describing the similarities between the two nations, citing that they were "engaged in a struggle for existence" and "in constant clash with the decisive majorities in the United Nations." Both nations were influenced by religion, believed that they were a "chosen people," and were perceived as minorities trying to survive in their homelands.⁴² Like South Africa, Israel did not sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and both nations may have developed nuclear weapons to have "a weapon of last resort" in the event that Western military assistance did not materialize.⁴³

These similarities led Israel and South Africa to work together to develop various types of weaponry, including nuclear and potentially chemical and biological.⁴⁴ It is suspected that South Africa provided uranium, other mineral resources, and money to Israel, while Israel provided South Africa with scientists, research, and technology.⁴⁵ In addition to assistance with the 1977 nuclear test, Israel helped South Africa test weapons in 1979, which was the culmination of a decade of work between South Africa and Israel to construct and test nuclear weapons; additionally, Israel tested its own weapons in South Africa.⁴⁶ Israel's aid to South Africa in the development of nuclear weapons was a problem larger than proliferation in South Africa and the clear violation of arms embargos against South Africa. U.S. policy toward Israel would have been affected, as aid to Israel would need to be reconsidered in light of American anti-apartheid legislation, while Israel's Arab neighbors

might have found it necessary to develop weapons systems of their own, obviously exacerbating the tensions in the Middle East.⁴⁷

Western nations were also guilty of aiding the development of South Africa's nuclear program, demonstrating inconsistency by spreading nuclear technology while favoring non-proliferation. The United States and Great Britain became involved in South Africa after World War II to access uranium and, in return, provided assistance in nuclear development through computers and weapons-grade uranium.⁴⁸ The US Atomic Energy Commission began working with South Africa in 1957, while in the 1970s, Britain helped South Africa develop the means to produce uranium hexafluoride.⁴⁹ The United States opposed UN measures intended to "ban all nuclear cooperation with South Africa," because it wanted to preserve its own interests, despite President Carter's limitations on aid to South Africa.⁵⁰ The United States was also involved in the development of the Safari nuclear reactors, and A. J. A. Roux credited the United States with much of the success of South Africa's nuclear program.⁵¹

France and Germany were also important players in the development of South Africa's nuclear program. In 1975, Dr. Roux announced South Africa's desire to discuss uranium enrichment with "friendly countries," one of which was likely France, who also sold aircraft to South Africa, financed extraction plants, provided reactors, and was one of the biggest purchasers of South African uranium.⁵² France's actions violated arms embargoes against South Africa, and there was a rumor that France had pledged to "go easy on safeguards against military uses" while pledging to end arms sales to "oppressive regimes" and then making new agreements with South Africa.⁵³ Iran joined France and South Africa in an arrangement in which Iran supplied oil, South Africa supplied uranium, and France supplied technology.⁵⁴ During the 1970s, South African and German uranium enrichment corporations worked together and brought the technology to create enriched fuel to South Africa, while trade, investment, and arms provisions brought the two countries closer together and contributed to an image of South Africa that was "more favorable" in West Germany than in other Western countries.⁵⁵

The involvement of Iran, France, and Germany in South Africa's nuclear program created the potential for increased tensions, violated arms embargoes, and continued the spread of nuclear weapons. The participation of these nations in the development of South Africa's nuclear program was a cause for concern in that it continued the build-up of nuclear arsenals despite the desire to curb proliferation. It also drew Western Europe into ambiguous positions regarding other policies toward South Africa, and created political and economic ties among a variety of countries that seriously complicated international affairs in the midst of the already complex relationships of the Cold War. Such relationships would become even more complicated in the event of any open conflict.

There is one extremely critical question that arises when discussing South Africa's, or any other nation's, nuclear weapons program: under what conditions or in what situation would the government believe that the use of nuclear weapons is the appropriate response? In South Africa, the combination of the rise of "black majority rule in Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe" during the late 1970s, and the guerilla campaigns that came out of these countries, combined with the growing sense of isolation from the West, pushed South Africa to increase defense spending and make development and use of nuclear weapons plausible.⁵⁶ By 1981, conflict with Namibia had continued, guerillas had entered South Africa, and protests and strikes continued in Soweto, the Cape, and other South African urban areas. In light of these events, J. E. Spence wrote that the government's view of the greatest threat to South Africa was a guerilla "war of liberation," a threat that was elevated by the creation of Mozambique, Angola, and Zimbabwe.⁵⁷ These states harbored African National Congress (ANC) and South West African People's Organisation resistance and had Marxist governments, which was perceived as a threat in itself to South Africa and fueled South African fears.⁵⁸ While the governments of these three countries had pledged not to allow their countries to be used as "launching pads for guerilla warfare against the Republic," it was impossible for them to prevent guerilla movements, and South Africa responded in an "increasingly militarized" way to these threats.⁵⁹ Jane Hunter speculated that maps in the possession of the

ANC supported the idea that the South African government would use nuclear weapons, specifically neutron bombs, against internal opponents to preserve its power.⁶⁰

South Africa also felt threatened by increased Soviet influence in the surrounding region and feared that the Soviet Union wanted to prevent the West from having access to raw materials and from gaining influence in the region.⁶¹ Additionally, the Republic felt pressure from the instability surrounding the fall of the Shah in Iran in 1979, from the fact that it was not accepted as an ally of the West, and from the good chance that the West would not only fail to protect South Africa from the Soviets, but would also "dissociate" itself from South Africa, reduce trade, and impose economic sanctions.⁶² Continued Soviet military presence, guerilla attacks, UN sanctions, Western pressure against apartheid, and developments toward "genuine majority rule in South Africa" all contributed to the growing possibility that South Africa might turn to declaring possession of, or actually using, nuclear weapons to prove itself to the world, to ward off Soviet and African influence, and to "encourage Western intervention."⁶³ The use of nuclear weapons, especially in a preventative attack, would demonstrate the Republic's military capability and inhibit and discourage other states from attacking South Africa.⁶⁴ Nuclear weapons might have been especially useful to South Africa if the Soviet Union supported opponents to apartheid and had weapons that could reach South Africa. In this situation, the South African government would be able to claim self-defense, thus demonstrating the South African government's "commitment to assure the survival of the Afrikaner people."⁶⁵

Ronald Walters speculated that the South African government would not count consequences of nuclear action among its primary concerns, since targets would be located hundreds or thousands of miles from the country,⁶⁶ but it would have been extremely ineffective and unwise for South Africa to use nuclear weapons. The government still ran the risk of isolating itself from the West and "inviting diplomatic and economic retaliation" if it were to continue developing nuclear weapons.⁶⁷ J. E. Spence believed that nuclear weapons were not useful against the "revolutionary move-

ments" South Africa faced, as threats of nuclear attacks do not give a government leverage over revolutionaries who have "everything to gain and nothing to lose" and for whom "death is a matter of comparative indifference."⁶⁸ Although South Africa was the strongest military and economic power in southern Africa, it would be impossible to prevent guerilla attacks; however, South Africa's conventional weaponry gave the Republic an ability to deter and respond to attacks that nuclear weapons would not enhance.⁶⁹ Despite these compelling reasons against developing and using nuclear weapons, Walters contrasts the South African situation to the United States' involvement in Vietnam. He believed that the South African government neither fully considered international public opinion nor had "the option of withdrawal" like the United States had, making it more likely that the Republic would defend its way of life through nuclear means,⁷⁰ even though such action would not produce the desired results and would create an even more dangerous situation for South African security and for the global community as a whole.

South Africa's possession of nuclear weapons was a "grave threat to the whole of Africa," making the Republic's nuclear program a truly global concern, especially during the 1970s as South Africa's isolation increased and incentives against developing and using nuclear weapons slowly disappeared.⁷¹ This pattern of an isolated, alienated nation with hostile neighbors and a secret program to develop nuclear weapons that it had the potential to use against its neighbors repeats itself in numerous countries during the last decades of the twentieth century and forces the major Western powers to respond to the threats posed by these situations. This need is complicated by the degree of Western influence in the creation of these nuclear programs and the complex diplomatic relationships that result. Consequently, conflict persists not only between Western powers and "pariah" nations but also among the Western powers, as some nations seek to protect their own diplomatic and economic interests while others attempt to bring ideals of non-proliferation and international cooperation to fruition. The net result, however, has continuously been greater conflict and division among all na-

tions, both Western and non-Western. However, the West directs more attention to certain nations as a result of Western interests, which often carry more weight in policy formation than do genuine threats to global security. Unfortunately, this creates a dangerous global situation when states who are not engaged in nuclear development, or who are engaged in only limited nuclear development, are the targets of non-proliferation policies while nations that do not attract Western political and economic attention are allowed to continue to developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

This was the case during the 1970s and 1980s. South Africa's nuclear program was a genuine threat to global security, yet the nation did not receive the same attention that other nations received, even though South Africa was working with these nations to develop its nuclear weapons. Some authors believe that the realistic chance that South Africa would use a nuclear weapon was quite small, but considering the enormous diplomatic pressures and threats that the South African government perceived, it is unclear whether South Africa would have become desperate enough to turn to a nuclear weapon to confront anticipated attacks. This makes one wonder where the greatest threat to global security lay during the 1970s, and whether world leaders made the appropriate policy choices in confronting challenges to peace and security.

This dilemma, over which nations pose the greatest threat to global security, resonates in contemporary affairs as the world continues to face the aftermath of both colonialism and the Cold War as well to struggle with the problem of the growing number of nuclear capable states. The issues surrounding South Africa's nuclear development are not unique to South Africa and can be seen in present relationships and conflicts among nations. It is as important today as it was in the 1970s for world leaders to recognize these conditions in all nations, not simply those in which there is political or economic interest, and take steps to defuse conflict and ensure that no country sees the need to build nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and thus put the welfare of the rest of the world in jeopardy.

ENDNOTES

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- ² Zdenek Červenka and Barbara Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis: Secret collaboration between West Germany and South Africa*, (New York: The New York Times Book Co., 1978), 105, 157.
- ³ Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 105; Roy E. Horton, III, "Out of (South) Africa: Pretoria's Nuclear Weapons Experience." INSS Occasional Paper 27, *Counterproliferation Series*. August 1999. <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS46635> (accessed October 26, 2006), 33.
- ⁴ Joseph Cirincione *et al*, *Deadly Arsenals: Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002), 360; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 110; Betts, Richard K., "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" *International Security* 4, no. 2 (Autumn 1979): 92. www.jstor.org/ (accessed October 11, 2006).
- ⁵ J. D. L. Moore, *South Africa and Nuclear Proliferation: South Africa's Nuclear Capabilities and Intentions in the Context of International Non-proliferation Policies* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987), 70; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 253.
- ⁶ Ronald W. Walters, *South Africa and the Bomb: Responsibility and Deterrence* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987), 26; Moore, *South Africa and Nuclear Proliferation*, 83.
- ⁷ Moore, *South Africa and Nuclear Proliferation*, 53.
- ⁸ Betts, "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" 96-97.
- ⁹ Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 441; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 104.
- ¹⁰ Walters, *South Africa and the Bomb*, 26; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 160, 162; Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 441-442.
- ¹¹ Horton, "Out of South Africa," 5-6; Walters, *South Africa and the Bomb*, 28.
- ¹² Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 114.

¹³ Cirincione *et al*, *Deadly Arsenals*, 360; Betts, "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" 99.

¹⁴ Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 442; Jane Hunter, "Israel, South Africa and the Bomb," *MERIP Middle East Report*, no. 143, "Nuclear Shadow over the Middle East" (Nov-Dec 1986): 13. www.jstor.org/ (accessed October 11, 2006); Horton, "Out of South Africa," 6.

¹⁵ Horton, "Out of (South) Africa," 29.

¹⁶ Walters, *South Africa and the Bomb*, 41-42, 43; Hunter, "Israel, South Africa, and the Bomb," 13; Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 442.

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²⁰ Cirincione *et al*, *Deadly Arsenals*, 359, 360.

²¹ Betts, "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" 107, 95; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 148.

²² Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 148.

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²⁵ Helen E. Purkitt and Stephen Burgess, "South Africa's Chemical and Biological Warfare Programme: A Historical and International Perspective," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 28, no. 2 (June 2002): 231, 252. www.jstor.org/ (accessed October 11, 2006); Betts, "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" 91, 97; Horton, "Out of (South) Africa," 29; Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 443.

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²⁸ Betts, "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" 104; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 224.

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⁴⁵ Betts, "A Diplomatic Bomb for South Africa?" 103; Hunter, "Israel, South Africa, and the Bomb," 13; Červenka and Rogers, *The Nuclear Axis*, 325, 160.

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⁵⁶ Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 443, 444.

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⁶⁹ Spence, "South Africa: The Nuclear Option," 447, 446; Moore, *South Africa and Nuclear Proliferation*, 126.

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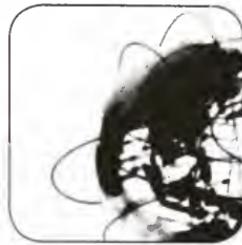
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Dependence and Development: The Case of Jamaica

JUNELLE WRIGHT

The decades following the Second World War were characterized by the transformation of the international system. The formation of the Bretton Woods system and the emergence of the East-West divide set the stage for a new international order shaped by liberal democratic ideas, international capitalism, and bipolar power struggles. In addition to the development of this new world order, a wave of decolonization swept across Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean producing a myriad of newly independent nation-states. Though formally recognized internationally and viewed as sovereign actors, these nations have been unable to integrate and function in the international order. Plagued by political instability, poverty, and debt, developing countries have been incapable of achieving the adequate levels of political and economic development needed to reap the benefits of the emerging global network. Instead, they have remained enmeshed in a state of underdevelopment.

This phenomenon of chronic underdevelopment in the Third World has been the focus of intense academic scrutiny aimed at determining its root causes. Many theorists have sought to establish a

link between underdevelopment, colonialism, and the international system in what is known as dependency theory. The basic premise of dependency theory is that underdevelopment is the result of the economic and political dependence of the periphery (Third World countries) upon the core (developed countries), which is the result of both the legacy of colonialism, the structure of the international system and the internal economic structures of third world nations.¹ Thus important questions to examine are: is dependency an accurate explanation for third world nations? Are there other explanations? To what levels are “dependent nations” truly dependent? In this paper, I will examine the various aspects of dependence presented by dependency theory and their validity by applying them to the case of Jamaica.

A Look at Dependency

Dependency and its profound impact on development are rooted in the organization and function of the national and international economy. Brazilian economist Theotonio Dos Santos defines dependency as “a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjugated.”² In other words, an unequal economic relationship exists between nations, by which some are strong and self-sustaining and the development of the weaker states is dependent upon that strength. This type of dependency, it is argued, is the direct result of colonial domination. The internal structures of former colonies have been shaped in such a way that has created a relationship of economic dependency on the members of the core. Under colonial rule, Dos Santos explains, the economies of colonial territories were focused on the production of goods and the extraction of raw materials for purpose of export. This resulted in specialization of production and a lack of diversification. Similarly, export focused production resulted in the neglect of domestic markets, in turn leading to lack of indigenous production and consumption capabilities. Moreover, the development of externally focused economies meant profits, as well as goods, could not be reinvested for the purpose of domestic development. This ultimately contributed to the present underdevelopment.³

After independence, these economies remained bound in the colonial economic structure. They continued to rely upon the export of a few commodities for profit, making former colonies extremely vulnerable to shifts in the international demand for and value of these commodities. With the sale of these commodities being necessary to acquire foreign exchange, decreases in demand propelled many nations towards crisis situations that could only be averted through borrowing. A solution to the lack of domestic resources was also sought through foreign investment and aid. Similarly, domestic investors chose to invest in strong multinational, rather than weak indigenous, enterprises. Coupled with external debt, these trends resulted in an outward flow of financial capital. These four areas—foreign investment, foreign aid, external debt, and trade relations—form the foundation of Third World dependency, crippling the development process.⁴

Foreign investment, the first major contributor to underdevelopment, creates a dependent relationship strikingly similar to that which existed under colonial rule, namely foreign ownership of capital. As we will see in the case study of Jamaica, Third World nations, given their insufficient resources, seek to fund development by attracting foreign investment—both direct and indirect—in a strategy known as dependent development.⁵ Direct investment by multi-national enterprises often does more harm than good for the development process, as only a small portion of the profits is reinvested in local enterprises. Additionally, the enterprises established are under foreign ownership and based upon foreign interests. This has serious implications for domestic politics within the dependent nation, as multinationals gain an increasing amount of influence.⁶ Indirect investment is particularly dangerous for developing nations given its volatility, as it is subject to 'contagion' and shifting market conditions. Political risks may deter private investors and investment panics based on speculation can devastate Third World economies as they did during the debt crisis of the 1980s. At that time, the aftermath of the oil shocks of the 1970s caused investment panic, resulting in a collapse of financial institutions that swept across the Third World from South East Asia to Latin America and forced many nations to default on international loans.⁷

According to dependency theorists, *foreign aid* is another source of foreign capital that presents an obstacle to developing countries. Foreign aid can come in the form of private aid packages established bilaterally (such as U.S. aid to Jamaica) or through international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Appealing for foreign aid of this kind is another method by which Third World nations seek, or are compelled to seek, in order to fund their development as a result of financial crisis. One of the main problems of foreign aid is the conditionality often tied to funding. Private aid from countries such as the United States is often tied to conditions such as support for foreign policy objectives or terms of trade favorable to the stronger nation—and disadvantageous to the domestic economy. In the case of the IMF or World Bank, aid is often tied to demands for structural adjustments or budget controls that can be costly to implement, both politically and socially.⁸ Accepting such conditionalities leads to a tremendous loss in the political power and independence of developing nations by depriving the leadership control over its own economic policy. This loss of power forms the core of the *neo-colonialist* argument. According to the neo-colonialist perspective, there can be “no real political independence while economic dependence remains.”⁹ In other words, although the colonies were granted political independence, colonial style dependence continues in the form of economic domination. Lack of control over the economy, in turn, contributes to *state failure*—the inability of the state to meet the demands of its citizenry—and underdevelopment.¹⁰

The burden of *external debt* is another serious contributor to underdevelopment and dependency, and is closely linked to the issue of foreign aid. As previously mentioned, aid comes from unilateral grants by developing nations, through loans from international organizations, or from loans also granted by private commercial banks. As nations seek to fund their development (or advert financial crisis) by way of foreign or domestic loans, increasing debts in combination with an inadequate pace of industrialization causes a greater and greater portion of export yields to be directed towards debt servicing rather than the necessary developmental programs. Short-term financial flows in particular contribute to this problem.

Short-term loans require repayment in one to two years—a span of time that is insufficient to achieve the level of large-scale development necessary to produce an adequate financial yield.¹¹ The result is the financial bondage of the periphery and little progress in development.

The final area of Third World dependency is that of *trade relations*. In many ways, the balance and structure of trade relations for developing countries serves as a catalyst for the crisis of debt and dependency on foreign aid. Recalling the initial discussion of the effects of colonial economic structures, many postcolonial economies rely on a few primary products of export—most of these being agricultural and other low value-added goods.¹² As a result, decreasing demand for these goods due to technological advancement and the emergence of substitutes causes a major decrease in value—and hence in profit—of these exports that can lead to financial crisis.¹³ Not only does this primary-product vulnerability affect dependency and development through aid, but trade practices of rich nations further solidify dependent relationships—and arguably actively under develop nations. Trading structures dominated by the economic interests of rich countries restrict the value of poor country products and their access to markets in developed nations by way of high tariffs, subsidies for their own agricultural products, as well as monopolies on industrial technology and intellectual property.¹⁴ These trade imbalances are detrimental to developing economies, and adjustments in these trade policies have the power to uphold or destroy them.

Dependency theory is perhaps the single most useful explanation of underdevelopment in the third world, although as with all theories, it has its limitations. Using the four basic elements of dependency, I will now examine the case of Jamaica and assess the applicability of these explanations to the nation's underdevelopment. I will also attempt to determine possible alternative explanations.

Dependency in the Case of Jamaica

The small island nation of Jamaica is one of deceptive natural beauty. Beyond its fair weather and fine beaches, the nation suffers the same fate shared by the majority of the developing world—

poverty, high rates of unemployment, significant external debt, corruption, political instability, crime, and violence. Consider the following statistics: In Jamaica, 18.7 percent¹⁵ of the population live below the poverty line and official unemployment is 11.2 percent¹⁶ despite high literacy rates and the productive potential of the society. According to the World Bank, in 2003 Jamaican debt had reached 6.1 billion U.S. dollars and continues to grow as the nation has faced sharp economic downturn.¹⁷ These economic conditions have contributed largely to the social problems of instability, crime, and violence that further inhibit the nation's development. Examined in the context of dependency theory one must ask: What kind of dependent relationships exists between Jamaica and developed nations? To what degree can the economic conditions, and the resulting development issues, in Jamaica be attributed to dependent relationships? And are there other viable explanations for these conditions? To this end, I will examine the Jamaican experience with development and the roles of *foreign investment, aid, external debt, and trade*.

An Overview of the Jamaican Economy

Jamaica's colonial history began in 1622, when the British seized the island. Jamaican exports during the early colonial era included tobacco, cocoa, indigo, and ginger. Its most important export, however, was sugar. Jamaica was the leading producer of sugar in the Caribbean for most of the 18th century. Most of its economic development was the result of private enterprise by the colonists, rather than the centralized delegation by the crown. Jamaica was also exploited for its geographic advantages. In the heart of Spanish territories, a large-scale illegal trading by way of piracy and plunder as well as legal forms of trade with Spain emerged, operating out of Port Royal. Together with the slave trade, this generated the wealth that fueled the sugar cane industry. As time progressed, however, the emergence of forms of sugar other than cane emerged, eroding its value. Additionally, the abolition of slavery handicapped the plantation system and British interest gradually waned.¹⁸ As early as 1869, however, Jamaica's wealth in bauxite was discovered. By 1939, the Bayers refinement process had made it marketable and

by 1952 it became one of Jamaica's primary exports.¹⁹ The modern economy of Jamaica relies primarily on the bauxite and aluminum industry as well as tourism. Tourism is particularly important, and the September 11th attacks on the United States dealt it a serious blow.

Foreign Investment, Aid, and Dependent Development

According to Mandel, the fundamental problem of developing nations in the Caribbean (and throughout the Third World) has been the lack of the structural and technological capacity for self-sustained economic growth.²⁰ As I will discuss in the section on trade, the prohibitively large expense of industrial machinery, and the rich country monopoly on patents, makes the achievement of self-sufficient growth nearly impossible. As a result, nations such as Jamaica have been obligated to rely on the only remaining means of development, namely, dependent development. Since before its independence in 1962, Jamaican leaders have relied upon foreign investment in an attempt to boost the economy and tackle the enormous task of alleviating the harsh living conditions suffered by its people. From 1950 until 1970, under both Jamaican Labor Party (JLP) and People's National Party (PNP) leadership, Jamaica pursued a strategy known as "industrialization by invitation." Jamaica sought to industrialize by attracting foreign direct investment and aid funding from the U.S. and other western nations. By adopting a pro-western, anti-communist foreign policy, they attempted to create a "friendly" investment atmosphere that would provide incentive for western companies and encourage the offering of aid packages. Additionally, a policy of import substitution was employed to nurture domestic industries.

Foreign companies invested heavily in the bauxite industry as well as tourism, banking, insurance, and export agriculture. Initially, these policies achieved some success in terms of gross domestic product (GDP), which grew at a rate of 7% per year.²¹ This growth, however, was deceptive. Firstly, the lack of domestic productive capacity necessitated the importation of an amount of energy, food, consumer goods, and industrial materials that far exceeded exports. The resulting trade deficit and insufficiency of funds deepened Ja-

maican dependency on foreign capital. Secondly, the growth experienced during the period was unevenly distributed, causing even greater inequality and startling increases in the unemployment rate, as formerly labor intensive jobs were overtaken by industrial technology. By 1972, the unemployment rate reached 24 percent and major sectors of the economy were foreign-owned.²² The result was political instability and an exponential increase in violent crime.

Recognizing the limitations and failures of the “industrialization by invitation” program, the newly elected PNP government under Michael Manley attempted to ‘undo’ Jamaican dependency through a series of radical reforms. The reforms included: 1) government purchase of key enterprises; 2) the promotion of regional integration among developing countries; and 3) the diversification of aid and export sources. Manley was a national socialist whose goals were to alleviate the desperate conditions of poverty and unemployment that plagued the nation. This program, known as “national economic development” sought to reestablish Jamaica’s control over its economy, resolve its social crisis, and reduce its vulnerability to fluctuations in the price of its key goods. One of his noteworthy successes was the formation of the International Bauxite Association (IBA), a cartel of bauxite producers that was tremendously effective in regaining Jamaican control of bauxite industries. His policy objectives also included increased trade with developing nations. He was a proponent of Third World solidarity, which he sought to achieve through the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This included more intimate relations with socialist nations (including Cuba), and generally aimed at “undermining market regulation in the international capitalist economy.”²³

Ultimately, however, this new plan suffered the same fate as that of the dependent development program—failure. The U.S. disapproval of Jamaican ties with Cuba dealt a serious blow to the economy when the U.S. cut off aid and ‘discouraged’ tourism to the island. In combination with other global factors such as the oil shocks, the result was financial crisis, the inevitable appeal to the IMF, and the demise of ‘independent’ development. Though the Manley government was reluctant to resort to IMF intervention, (first accepting, then rejecting the “shock treatment” plan²⁴),

it ultimately succumbed to the reality that there was *no alternative*. When the 'economic therapy' of the IMF—including the cutting of consumption levels and real wages—was applied, the negative social consequences resulted in the demise of the PNP government and the rise of the JLP under Edward Seaga.

The failure of the Manley economic program, and the attempt to develop independently, is a testament to the realities of third world dependency as argued by the proponents of dependency theory. In the case of Jamaica, the sheer lack of adequate financial and capital resources necessitates the appeal for support from abroad. This, of course, has implications for the political realm. In the 1950-60s, one of the key tactics of the Jamaican government was to 'play the U.S. card,' that is, to win the economic support of the U.S. by supporting its foreign policy objectives—a strategy that was reemployed under Seaga. Though this may seem an assertive and independent move on the part of Jamaica, no real independence existed. As soon as Manley withdrew that political support and pursued a more independent scheme, the economic situation proved unmanageable and growth unsustainable. Jamaica, therefore, arguably has a strong incentive—and possibly obligation—to cater to U.S. interests, even when that may entail compromising other national interests.

It can be argued, however, that the failure of the Manley economic program was not the result of Jamaican dependency, but rather personal policy errors in combination with global circumstances outside of Jamaican control. As Biddle and Stephens mention, both the oil shocks of 1973 and the intensity of Cold War bipolarity also contributed to its failure.²⁵ Even if these conditions failed to exist, it is plausible that the *structural* aspects of dependency would remain. This implies that the internal societal structure of Jamaica (and potentially other developing nations) is also the cause of its dependence and, in a way, artificially creates it. As Henke argues, the interests of Jamaican elites—which coincide with the interests of western nations—create a dependent relationship due to the elites' tremendous power in influencing the foreign economic policy goals of the state. The promotion of these interests steer the nation's economic policy in the direction of 'western-friendly' trade relations and thus dependency.²⁶ Similarly, the "structural block-

age," caused by primary commodity oriented economies that limit the division of labor and diversification, hinders development and results in economic dependency.²⁷

The Seaga government sought to repair the economic failures of the Manley era, which in practice meant the resurrection of the dependent development of the 1950-60s. Seaga's version of "industrialization by invitation" worked harder to woo the U.S.—then under President Reagan—and draw in economic support by taking a strong pro-U.S.-anti-Cuba stance. In this it was successful, achieving the establishment of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI)—a sort of Marshall Plan for the Caribbean.²⁸ Between 1980 and 1982, the level of U.S. aid to Jamaica grew from \$14.6 to \$140.7 million dollars, which was supplemented by heavy borrowing from the IMF and other organizations.²⁹ The major distinguishing factor between Seaga's strategy and that of his predecessor's was that he discarded import substitution. The Seaga government continued to nurture traditional industries as well as new enterprises, but relied more heavily on foreign loans and aid than direct investment.

The Seaga strategy was incapable of alleviating the economic and social crisis, and in many ways compounded it. The devaluations and adjustments prescribed by the IMF further intensified the soaring unemployment rate and balance of payments crisis. Moreover, under Seaga, Jamaican debt more than doubled from U.S \$1.7 to U.S. \$4.7 billion.³⁰ This led to the crisis of debt service mentioned by dependency theorists where by an increasingly large portion of GDP is devoured by debt servicing—to the detriment of development programs. This is the Catch-22 of dependency.³¹

External Debt and Trade

The two main obstacles to Jamaican economic development continue to be external debt and a current account deficit. According to the World Bank, Jamaica's national debt in 2003 was much greater than what it was during the Seaga era of two decades before—U.S. \$6.1 billion—and debt servicing consumed up to 16.5 percent of the total GDP. Jamaica's negative trade balance intensified the debt problem. In 2004, the value of its imports was a staggering 60 percent of GDP.³² The problems of debt, current account deficits,

and negative trade relations are all intrinsically linked. As briefly mentioned before, the main problem that developing nations face is the lack of sufficient productive capacity to meet the demands of society. Dependency theorists explain this inadequacy as being the result of restricted access to technological (and other) means of production, which are dominated by the developed nations—the international bourgeoisie.³³ Moreover, as Girling argues, the external source of technological capacity not only causes dependency on the developing world for those means; it also results in the misallocation of industrial resources. Essentially, production is not focused on the necessary sectors (such as agricultural equipment) but rather those “necessities” of the bourgeoisie (like luxury automobiles).³⁴ The lack of technological resources and innovation intensifies the dependent relationship both economically and politically, and gives the developing nations a significant advantage in trade relations. The more efficiently produced, cheaper goods of the developed world force domestic production to deteriorate, ultimately deepening the dependency.

Dependency is a vicious cycle. The lack of technological means of production necessitates that both the necessary consumer products and productive capacity be acquired from an external source. The lack of sufficient domestic capital to obtain these goods then necessitates institutional borrowing—which contributes to debt and comes with conditionalities—and foreign direct investment. The conditionalities imposed by international financial institutions—often including the liberalization of trade—then results in the flooding of the market with cheap foreign goods, destroying domestic enterprises that are unable to compete. Thus, the externally-oriented development counteracts itself, foreign funded growth is undone, and the cycle repeats itself, driving the developing nation further and further into debt and dependency.³⁵ The stagnation and even negative growth in GDP experienced by Jamaica between 1989 and 1999 is a testament to the reality of this type of downward spiral of dependency. Annual growth as of 2000 was a sobering 0.8 percent and continues to be barely positive.³⁶ Having initial profited from the dependent development approach employed in the 1950's, 1960s and 1980s, these indicators seem to have frozen and then

declined despite continuing contributions of aid and funding from the U.S. and the IMF. In short, Jamaica's economic growth could not be sustained due to lack of innovation and the erosion of state finances through debt services.

It is hard to say, however, whether or not the cycle of Jamaican debt and underdevelopment is solely the result of the trade and technology advantages of the developing world. As mentioned in the last section, it is also important to weigh the influence of the internal social structure. In the Jamaican case, these crises can arguably be linked to corruption in government and clientelist relationships within the JLP and PNP. The potential for the misuse of IMF and aid funds due to these two factors is equally detrimental to the system. As Pranab explains, "...when public resources meant for building productivity-enhancing infrastructure are diverted for politicians' private consumption growth rates will...be affected adversely."³⁷ The misallocation of resources, as we previously discussed, is greatly enhanced, not only by external and internal interests of the bourgeoisie, but the institutionalized clientalist structure of Jamaica, by which the party in power allocates resources towards its constituency in order to maintain its power.³⁸ Since their inception, the PNP and JLP have effectively established a clientalist hegemony in Jamaican society. This affects the efficient use of funding, firstly, by resulting in the divergence of one social group to the exclusion of others and, secondly, by solidifying the dominance of the local elite—the same elites whose interests favor dependency. In addition, corruption and clientelism further enflame the social crises of violence, which can hinder development programs and discourage foreign investment.

Conclusion

In light of the case of Jamaica, what conclusions can we reach about the utility and accuracy of the arguments of dependency theorists? How real is Third World dependency, and what other explanations can be offered? The Jamaican experience between 1950 and today demonstrates the reality and applicability of dependency theory in the economic realm. Empirical evidence also

suggests that this economic dependence leads to a profound level of political dependency, but the extent of its effect is not entirely clear. The Manley program would seem to suggest that some level of political self-determination still remains. The economic restraints, however, are clearly demonstrated. It is also clear that structural dependency—both in the external and internal political and economic order—does indeed exist and causes underdevelopment. As we have seen, the inadequacies and inefficiencies of the internal environment propagate the dependency on external sources. As long as these inadequacies persist, Jamaica and other Third World nations will continue to be dependent. The case of Jamaica also highlights the importance of social dynamics, such corruption, the existence or tendency towards clientelism, and the resulting inefficiencies, in inhibiting development. This may suggest that without transformation in the political culture, underdevelopment cannot be corrected.

In sum, dependency in Jamaica is the product of both internal and external factors that make it vulnerable to the interests of the domestic and international elite. This is a complicated situation that may be exploited by numerous actors and is not easily corrected. This fate is one shared by the majority of developing nations. Dependency is the result of a complex system of internal and external structural restraint. The demands of the liberal world market economy combined with the lack of domestic institutional capacity (including, for example, the rule of law) result in the crippling of Third World nations. The reality of dependency represents not only a hindrance to the nations affected by it, but for the international community as a whole. The major issues of international society associated with economic development, such as extreme poverty and inequality, are also linked to the complexity of dependent economic relationships. As such, it can be said that the key to finding solutions to these complex problems lies in the correction of Third World dependency.

ENDNOTES

¹ B.C. Smith, *Understanding Third World Politics*, 2nd Edition, Indiana University Press, 2003, 75-76; Theotonio Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence," *The American Economic Review*, vol. 60 no.2, May 1970, 231

² Dos Santos, pp 231

³ Ibid. 232

⁴ Smith, 77

⁵ William Jesse Biddle and John D. Stephens, "Dependent Development and Foreign Policy: The Case of Jamaica," *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.33 no.4, Dec. 1989

⁶ Smith, 79-80

⁷ Joseph M. Greico and G. John Ikenberry, *State Power and World Markets*, W.W. Norton Company 2003, pp 267-270

⁸ Smith. 83-84

⁹ Smith, 76

¹⁰ Ibid. 240-241

¹¹ Grieko & Ikenberry, pg 264-266

¹² Dos Santos, 233

¹³ Greico & Ikenberry, 254-257

¹⁴ U.N. Development Report 2005, Ch.4 http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2005/pdf/HDR05_chapter_4.pdf

¹⁵ UNDP, <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=JAM>

¹⁶ Statistical Institute of Jamaica, <http://www.statinja.com/>

¹⁷ World Bank, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/JAMAICAEXTN/0,,menuPK:338345~pagePK:141132~piPK:141107~theSitePK:338335,00.html>

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²⁰ Jay R. Mandle, "Caribbean Dependency and Its Alternatives," *Latin American Perspectives*, Summer 1984, 111-112

²¹ Biddle and Stephens, 416

²² Biddle and Stephens, 418, Denis Pantin, "Prospects for the FDI Export Model in Jamaica and the Caribbean," *Latin American Perspectives*, vol. 17 no. 1, 56

²³ Ibid., 421

²⁴ Ibid., 425

²⁵ Biddle and Stephens, 424

²⁶ Holger Henke, "Jamaica's Decision to a Neoliberal Development Strategy: Realignment in the State-Buisness-Class Triangle," *Latin American Perspectives*, Sep. 1999, 9-10

²⁷ Delacroix, Jacques and Ragin, Charles C., "Structural Blockage: A Cross National Study of Economic Dependency, State Efficiency, and Underdevelopment," *The American Journal of Sociology*, May 1981, 1314

²⁸ Biddle and Stephens, pg 425

²⁹ Ibid., see also: Pantin, 58-61

³⁰ Pantin, 60-61

³¹ Ibid.

³² Source: The World Bank

³³ Robert Girling, "Technology and the Dependent State: Reflections on the Case of Jamaica," *Latin American Perspectives*, Autumn 1976, 54-55

³⁴ Girling, 55

³⁵ see: Girling

³⁶ Source: The World Bank, see also USAID, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin_america_caribbean/country/jamaica/index.html

³⁷ Pranhab Bardhan, "Corruption and Development: A Review of Issues," *Journal of Economic Literature*, Sep. 1997, 1328

³⁸ see: Amanda Sives, "Changing Patrons, from Politician to Drug Don: Clientelism in Downtown Kingston Jamaica," *Latin American Perspectives*, Sep.2002, 67-68

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NOTES FROM
ABROAD



A Deadly Disconnect:

Misguided weaponry in the war on HIV and AIDS in Africa

CHRISTINA GRANBERG '03

HIV is a disease from America...YOU ARE KILLING US!

I found this message, penned by one of my students, on a slip of paper in the box designated, "Youth & Health: Anonymous Questions."

As an HIV/AIDS educator in rural Swaziland, I anticipate tough questions. But far dicier than teaching sex-ed in siSwati is responding to the rumors that hurl my credibility onto shaky ground: The accusations that the United States exports HIV-laced condoms to Africa; the fear that AIDS is part of a multi-pronged strategy of systemic oppression; the charges that internationals are turning a profit from the current crisis. Clearing my throat in front of the classroom and politely offering a fumbled but genuine response to these claims, my students are likely to remain doubtful. Their dubious expressions read, "Of course you tell us the West has no ulterior motives; your job depends on the very existence of this disease, and our believing you."

The economic West does indeed assume a superficial hero stance on the matter. Celebrities adopt AIDS orphans, benefit concerts jam for AIDS relief, and import boutiques feature beaded handicrafts

from affected corners of the world. Some would say the issue of AIDS in Africa is what's "sexy" on the social justice scene today.

The current situation in Swaziland, Southern Africa, is far more insidious. It involves a nineteenth century scourge—Colonialism—that traumatized the continent much of the 20th century, and is now metastasizing as it fuses with this foremost health crisis of the 21st century, HIV/AIDS. This predicament poses a serious dilemma for internationals approaching the topic, and demands scrutiny in our resource investment, coordination with community efforts, and the very manner in which we view and advise the "beneficiaries."

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A small, landlocked bead of land, Swaziland is routinely eclipsed by the vacillating infamy and glory of her neighbors. The notorious economic upheaval of Zimbabwe and South Africa's status as the darling of democratic success still garner bolder headlines. Nevertheless, Swaziland maintains a sobering distinction as the nation with the highest rates of HIV in the world, with an estimated 43 percent of the adult population infected. One indicator of this statistic emerged last year when Swaziland was identified as the nation with the lowest life expectancy anywhere on the globe, capping the average lifespan at just 32.6 years.

Swaziland is a relative pocket of peace—at least cosmetically—amid a region still reeling from brutal civil war and Apartheid's systemic racism. However, despite evading armed conflict, the country still bears scars of British dominance and its repercussions. This is visible in a school system that flushes out even capable students who fail English. It causes a continuing dilemma in the shifting recognition of traditional land and property rights. Swaziland's colonial past also persists in a deeply rooted dependence—and even insistence—on the expertise and contributions of outsiders.

Even in a nation admired for largely retaining cultural consistency following formal colonialism, Swaziland endures destructive social transformations. Industrialization extracted able-bodied men from their rural communities into the mines, large scale farms, and trucking industries across southern Africa, leading to the normal-

ization of more transient lifestyles. This slices a deep wound in the traditional Swazi family unit and gender dynamics. Symptomatic of this general disintegration of traditional values is widespread alcoholism that further inflames rates of sexual abuse and HIV transmission. But the most dangerous side effects of its industrialized colonialism are the "corridors of disease," linking health crises such as HIV with transient laborers' rural communities. No strategists could have designed a more effective tool for epidemiological disaster.

• • •

HIV/AIDS in Africa is a well-publicized issue attracting aid workers, religious groups, medical school students, and tourist volunteers alike. However, the economic and cultural divide is often all too visible: Photographs frequently printed in the national newspapers display non-governmental organization (NGO) and United Nations representatives seated in table-clothed discussion, tucked away in Swaziland's forested resorts. Poised over buffet meals and floral arrangements, they seem to express to the viewer, "Don't worry—We're working on it," in less convincing terms.

Is it any surprise that the increasing presence of internationals anchored in the country "combating HIV & AIDS" is often perceived as the newest wave of imperialism? The foreign *belungu* aid workers equipped with logo-emblazoned Landcruisers zigzag the country, trailing clouds of suspicion in their midst. They are all imported parts transforming the issues of HIV and AIDS into an *industry* in the region—at least in the eyes of their intended beneficiaries. Some Swazis will allege, "These NGOs are making a living off our suffering." Others go so far as to accuse the West of manufacturing the disease: "Infecting [Swazis] with the disease is a strategy of America and Europe; they don't want to see Africans progress." Despite the heavy pockets and good intentions of internationals, the misconceptions surrounding the origins of HIV present a stumbling block in the path of their success.

Even more unflattering is the atmosphere of competition and lack of coordination amongst NGOs serving rural communities.

Major victims of this rivalry are rural clinics. Several NGOs dispatch mobile testing teams throughout the country on appointed days to serve the unequipped rural clinics. Clinics can typically expect one testing day per month due to the high demand. When I first arrived in 2003, there was only one national organization with a *de facto* monopoly on training counselors for HIV testing. Finally other organizations were permitted to offer these services, though the swelling need for mobile testing still overextended the various teams. At Mashobeni Clinic, where I assist with arranging HIV testing, the regional NGO mobile testing unit experienced an “overbooked” schedule for several months. In offering and encouraging testing, consistency is vital. Therefore the clinic staff and I attempted to arrange for another organization to take their place for the time period. When it became known that the other had been involved, both organizations refused to work in the community. The old organization accused the stand-in team of “always stealing” their territory. After coming once, the new organization complained, “Why should we continue there? *They* have the numbers,” meaning the initial testing team had the benefit of reporting first-time testers to grant providers. In the end, the real losers were the rural community members, and it took some coaxing to retrieve one of the testing teams.

Another example of this dangerous disconnect occurs periodically in Swaziland when a particular faith-based operation pumps teams of young, well-meaning internationals into rural communities to teach for several days in area schools. Their curriculum, an energetic series of activities offering the basics of HIV, dangers of early sex, and abstinence promotion, engages students and sends them home with colorful workbooks complete with virginity oaths. This program may be appealing in a nation as heavily religious as Swaziland. However, problems arise when the content of the curriculum relies on simplifications, half-truths, and outright falsehoods—such as teaching the students that condoms contain holes and cannot protect them against HIV. More disconcerting is when the misinformation occurs within communities where long-term Peace Corps volunteers teach the exact opposite. Confusion amongst young people in this case can be a life sentence.

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Regardless of access to accurate information, Swazis are hyper-aware of HIV and AIDS. A vast array of organizations and initiatives within the country clutter the landscape with tailored imagery and slogans. The red AIDS ribbon is pasted across rubbish bins and minibuses, incorporated into handicraft designs, and adorns the masthead of the daily paper. It is an ubiquity that nearly renders the symbol meaningless.

Accompanying the iconography of the crisis is exhausted rhetoric. There are the tired expressions splashed across rusty roadside billboards, “Be Wise: Condomise”, and “AIDS Kills / Jesus Saves.” Along with this is the sterility of NGO-speak labeling the nation, “the epicenter of the HIV pandemic” in need of “behavior change” and “impact mitigation.” Even the term “orphan” did not exist in siSwati until recent years, much less the qualifiers “single orphan” (death of one parent), “double orphan” (death of both parents) and the “orphaned elderly” (aged Swazis whose children—their traditional caregivers—have died).

This uncoordinated information overload not only costs organizations money better spent elsewhere, but works to desensitize a nation that can’t afford to look away.

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Undeniably, leadership plays an enormous role in containing the crisis. The Kenyan government’s refusal to acknowledge HIV in the country for fear of damaging tourism was a deadly misstep. Alternatively, Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni acted promptly as he watched fellow comrades become ill, and rates in the country were stabilized through comprehensive public education. Swaziland’s response to HIV could be described, at best, as “laissez-faire.”

King Mswati III, a British-educated 38-year-old, rules Swaziland as one of the last absolute monarchs in the world. In the midst of globalization, he solidifies the country’s traditional leadership and cultural observances. However, Mswati appears more firmly staunch on levying resources to equip his wives with luxury SUVs

and palatial homes than advocating for the intensive reforms crucial in resuscitating Swaziland's prospects for survival. In recent years the king has graced *Parade* magazine's exposé of the world's "Top Ten Dictators" for his pattern of choosing high-school age brides, along with his general negligence in addressing and combating the HIV crisis.

Despite falling far short of democracy, the Swazi monarchy and feudalist chiefdom system cannot be an excuse for inaction on the part of the international community. The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is a highly stipulated fund that critics view as more of a dangling carrot toward democracy than resolute resource sharing in the name of global health and welfare. Even so, the \$15 billion fund is the largest government contribution to fighting HIV in "the world's most severely affected nations." Inconceivably, with infection rates steadily climbing toward half the population, Swaziland is not a recipient of PEPFAR funds. A qualifying index measures potential grant recipients on several principals, including steps taken toward democratic governance. But with rates of HIV infection far from stabilized, now is not the time to chastise the kingdom for its political shortcomings. As with other regions of the developing world, expecting Swaziland to "earn handouts" in the name of political responsibility and sustainability—especially when the disease is gutting the population of its teachers, medical professionals, and skilled laborers—is not only unrealistic. It is criminal.

But sadly, even when millions pour into the country from other sources, there is an unfortunate propensity for ineffective investment. In September of 2003, just as I first began work in Swaziland, a pricey health surveillance system was unveiled throughout Swaziland. The intention was to install the computer software in rural clinics to easily measure general HIV transmission and regulate antiretroviral (ARV) drug treatments among rural patients. The system sounded practical—even revolutionary. The catch? Most clinics in rural Swaziland lack consistent electricity, much less computers and PC-proficient staff. This fruitless effort came at a time when HIV patients in Swaziland had access to only two CD-4 count machines—vital scanning devices for measuring immune

system strength. Just as perilous are the erratic supplies of ARVs throughout the country. Patients in later stages of the disease rely on these drug treatments, and irregular availability is not only detrimental to their own health, but may introduce resistant strains of HIV into the population. My point is that crucial resources, such as testing equipment and drug therapy, *are* sorely needed here. But they require careful investigation and coordination with local needs and capabilities.

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International efforts must also recognize the significant grassroots responses to HIV already underway.

Ubuntu, the cultural concept most espoused by western admirers of the region, is best described as the interdependent relationships contributing to a greater sense of community. As one might expect, the impact of HIV/AIDS devastating Swazi families demands that communities work to compensate for their losses and respond proactively.

One area of success is orphan care. UNICEF predicts that by 2010 orphans will constitute at least ten percent of the Swaziland's population. Orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) have had one or more parent die, resulting in the insecurity of food, inability to pay school fees, and greater risk for HIV through abuse or in caring for an ailing parent.

Rural feeding centres, termed "Neighborhood Care Points," offer local OVCs a hot meal served by volunteer community members. Many feeding schemes also incorporate informal education that attempts to compensate for the inability of many children to afford formal schooling.

Some feeding schemes function with assistance from community gardens, or from local cooperatives dedicating a specific percentage of their income to orphan relief. When communities fall short on supplies, it presents a valuable opportunity for international organizations to reinforce their efforts. Positive partnerships form between local Neighborhood Care Points and organizations such as the World Food Programme, who donates fortified "Corn-

Soya" powder to committed communities. UNICEF partners with informal schools, training volunteer teachers and offering school supplies—even when the "classroom" consists of a tent, its blackboard the outside wall of a latrine. This resource sharing honors the integrity of grassroots efforts, and the task of establishing and maintaining these Care Points remains with committed members of the community.

What is essential in Swaziland is a multi-dimensional response. This involves the coordination of international aid efforts in the country toward their common adversary, HIV, instead of the discordant competition that transforms patients into commodities. It requires the cooperation and transparency of internationals with local leadership and community members. It must be a nuanced, truly integrated process with realistic expectations of communities and individuals, with the understanding that scars from colonialism will take time to fade.

Most of all, it requires that we look to Swaziland for the answers.

Remedies are surfacing from unexpected sources, namely a revived interest in specific Swazi customs once rendered passé by Colonialism. Take, for example, male circumcision, once common practice and now a rarity. Circumcised men are *60 percent less likely* to contract HIV, and—to the astonishment of some—men of all ages are gradually choosing the procedure as a form of HIV prevention (Incidentally, the US Agency for International Development, USAID, axed funding that would subsidize cost of the procedure). In one rural community, members of the local police force conduct discussion groups to encourage more men to consider the simple surgery.

Another traditional practice of significant value today gives hope to pregnant women in Swaziland, of whom 43 percent test positive for HIV. Drug treatment can effectively prevent transmission from mother to child throughout pregnancy and during birth. Despite these measures, breastfeeding poses an additional risk to the newborn. Among traditional Swazi family roles, wet-nursing was not uncommon. In today's circumstances, allowing an HIV-negative

sister or mother to breastfeed the baby of an infected mother can be life-saving.

These are only a few of many Swazi traditions resurrected to cope with the current HIV crisis. By first considering the amassed knowledge and experience of a community, internationals may find how to best partner outside resources.

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Home to a small population of 1.2 million with a single ethnic group and native language, Swaziland serves as a microcosm for wide-ranging public health studies and medical ethnographies. International health and aid workers in the HIV/AIDS sector stand to learn extensively here before the toughest battles—in sprawling nations of complex populations like Russia and India—erupt.

Swaziland faces significant internal challenges testing the sacrifices communities are compelled to make in their collective response to the crisis. It is clearly *ubuntu*'s most trying hour. As economist Jeffrey Sachs advised, considerable funding is needed in order to undercut the factors contributing to HIV, such as poverty. But financial support must be in tandem with grassroots efforts, responses to the pandemic that tap into local knowledge—not solely Western frameworks of disease-control. It will be a partnership of homegrown solutions and international resource-sharing that may provide the most effective weapon against HIV, a virus that—without hyperbole—threatens the very existence of the Swazi people.



Lessons From a Naked Man

DAVID SNYDER '92

It was a naked man in Penn Station who welcomed me home. Waiting for the train to Baltimore I watched as he climbed the stairs into the terminal, as if a naked man was the last thing even he himself expected to see, and disappeared into the rush of the station. I cast a sideways glance at the faces of those around me. No one seemed to notice.

Seconds later a shout arose from inside the terminal, growing louder and more urgent as the naked man returned, sandwiched now between two broad-shouldered policemen. As he was dragged past the man twisted purposefully to direct his tirade at the commuters gathered around me.

"Work all of your lives in an office building, for what?" he screamed. "You are all insane! Can you hear me? You are all insane!"

His cries bounced off of the green tiled walls, then died amidst the rush of the station. As he was led from the hall, commuters filled the space behind him. The middle-aged woman standing beside me grunted and turned back to her newspaper.

One week before I had been in Sudan, watching as Africa's largest country bled out its western populace in a fit of genocide. The

months before that had begun to blend into broken bits of sensory collage—a woman dying of AIDS in Malawi, a man who had threatened me in Haiti, a monsoon rain in Guatemala. I added the naked man to my litany and boarded the train to Baltimore.

After six years in Africa, such are the markers by which you begin to measure your life. Having spent much of that time working in disaster zones around the world, those markers assume an odd and irregular pattern, like the gravestones of soldiers buried as they fell on some distant battlefield. It is a life where places, not days, become the measure of time. So it remains for many of us who live outside the familiar patterns of life in the United States.

It occurred to me that I had crossed some Rubicon as I was packing my suitcase in a rented apartment in Macedonia. It was July 1999, and for three months I had been burning myself out amidst a million refugees from the Yugoslavian province of Kosovo. Only two years into the work of relief and development, it was my first big emergency—my introduction to the unbounded world of the professional humanitarian. Some in the field will tell you such work is addictive—the pace and tempo of disaster. But the job is not for everyone. Many burn out quickly, and ease back into the comfortable pace of long-term development. Others return home, develop their photos and tuck the experience into their memory.

But some stay, chasing headlines from one passport page to the next until only the monumental can hold their attention. For many of them—and there are many out there—the gap between past and present grows wider each year, until the key to home is worn so smooth by distance that it never quite opens the door again. Eventually, they cannot go back. Packing my bag that night in Macedonia, I told myself I would not be one of them.

As I write this now, I am sitting at my desk in a leafy suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa. I have to ground myself in this place and time because casting a net over the years that have elapsed since that night in Macedonia seems nearly impossible. On my resume I will list that I have traveled in Uganda and Timor, Angola and Sierra Leone. I will explain to some future employer perhaps that I have worked with Afghan refugees in Pakistan, volcano victims in Congo, and tsunami survivors in Sri Lanka. I will try to find em-

ployable ways to explain that I have met amazing people and seen amazing things.

But that may not be enough. If my future boss is like others I have met in these intervening years he will sit uneasily, having asked of my life overseas, his eyes setting slightly at the answers I struggle to proffer. He will study my face for a moment as if the subtitles flashing through the air between us do not match the movie he has paid to see. Sensing the disconnection I will fall back on brevity, condensing my experiences into sweeping understatement, reducing my life to bland overview. Suddenly, there will be no place for most of what has become important to me. That gap I feared will widen.

To know how different America can look—to understand that gap—you must see it first from afar. It is at once a remarkable and uneasy experience, like reading the diary, decades later, you kept as a troubled youth. As new eyes bring new insight, old truths, once shaken, demand a deeper restoration. That process can be wondrous or fearsome, dark or transcendent—both the risk of the journey and the reward of the traveler. But the price paid for either can be steep, an exchange of the common currency for decorous and wonderful bills you cannot tender in your old haunts.

Physically, of course, you are far removed overseas from everyone who once defined you. To remain connected, you must schedule the events by which your family marks its history—a cousin's wedding, the birth of a child, a high school graduation. You are forced by distance to choose the memories in which you will participate, those pages of the family album on which you will appear, and sacrifice the others to long distance calls over broken lines at early hours of the morning.

But you are removed in other ways less tangible, less immediately evident. From 8,000 miles away you lose touch with what, since you left, has become the fodder of day-to-day conversation. You come home reading from a different book, the easy sequence with which you once turned the pages lost.

You notice it subtly at first, offering pieces of your year to friends who shake their heads, smile, and turn the conversation gently back to more familiar ground—college friends, moves and purchases,

baby news. Over time, you find yourself searching for segways into the lives you once shared, your experiences at times an awkward suffix to the communal banter of your friends.

Each time you come home you must ease back into your past. In the first days back you study the photos on your mother's wall, buy fast food burgers and stand on the porch to scan a sky full of northern stars. You call friends and flip through the endless choices of radio stations. You watch *Jeopardy* and have pizza delivered.

But you must also ease back into America itself, divine from its unfamiliar pace the changes that have taken place in your absence. Having lived now for six years overseas, I find myself less able to reconcile the life that I left with the life that I am living. It is not a fatal flaw, I hope, not something that proper time home will not be able to restore. But the disconnect is real, if ineffable—a tectonic shift, deep and imperceptible, that finds you casting lines across the cracks that have formed at your wanderers feet, asking more questions and finding fewer answers.

Coming home, there are constants on which you depend—the smell of spring, the wave of an elderly neighbor—and baselines against which you test your memories, like side-street directions and the phone numbers of friends. Part of the pleasure of travel lies in the fulfillment of reconnection. In that sense, home is always home, real and tangible. But in the larger sense you can struggle to wrap your head around the concepts of home, concepts heightened like senses by your time away and worn by the new perspective you bring to bear: America as vital and vibrant, as history and as touchstone. America as unquenchable energy.

Coming home from a life abroad reminds you that there are tolls we pay for that energy, tolls I think we do not as Americans allow ourselves to tally. Increasingly, it seems, tomorrow has become the object of today, and possession the measure of our lives. Home on leave I catch myself wondering through my window at the lives of the workday commuters around me, at the ordered pace with which we sacrifice our time to the enigma of happiness. If there is one thing that strikes you coming home from Africa it is the relentless predictability of the life our wealth affords us in the United States, at the way routine becomes more comfortable than change.

Sometimes, suffocated by it, I find my mind wandering to places unbounded, searching for a single marker by which to measure the day, one thing to set today apart from yesterday. That a week can pass without one is perhaps the greatest fear I have of moving home.

Weighted with that feeling, I stepped off the train from New York and inched into Baltimore. Dragging my suitcase up the station stairs I entered the yellow glow of the terminal. It was after nine p.m., and the station sagged from the toll that day had taken. A woman in a beige skirt suit sat thumbing through a glossy women's magazine, waiting on a late train home. A station attendant pushed a dirty mop head into the corners of the terminal, its echoes hollow in the open space.

I moved towards the door and emerged onto Charles Street. The air was damp and city cold. Shrouded in the red haze of their exhaust, two yellow cabs crawled up to the curb where a businessman in a grey suit stood waiting. I had seen him board the train in Wilmington an hour earlier. He had taken a seat a few rows up from me, folded his jacket into the overhead rack, and disappeared into some paperwork spread carefully on the small fold out tray of the seat back.

I stood watching as he opened the door, eased his briefcase in ahead of him, and sank into the back seat of the taxi. As the cab crept away from the curb I stepped into the space behind it and glanced at the back of the car, where I could see him slumped in the rear window, his head silhouetted by the green glow of the fare ticking off the final minutes of his journey home. I stood there for a long moment struggling with all the newness of home—with the cold night air, with the year behind me, and with the nagging thought that maybe the naked man had it right after all.



In Search of Oliver Twist and His Lived Experiences

ANDREA KIM NEIGHBORS '05

In developing my research interests on orphanages in Khabarovsk, the main question that I always seem to ask myself is, “why?” Why am I interested in this institution and this place that I have never been to? I have always been curious as to how and why cultural anthropologists choose their field sites. Is it because there is a personal connection to the people and the land, or is it out of pure interest to explore something completely unfamiliar? Judging from my interactions with anthropologists, it might be one or the other, or some combination of both. This in itself fascinates me, but again, I cannot help but ask myself “why?” Perhaps it is a personal fear of conducting fieldwork and producing an ethnography that would not be seen as true by the community, a great concern, since I am approaching problems in the Russian Far East, a region that I have only been introduced to recently through academic studies and a personal fascination. I am not an orphan, nor am I from Khabarovsk, so why? I did not think there was a personal connection to this research, since it was designed out of pure academic interest. Why I was interested in this, and the fear of not doing a good job, lingered over my head.

In answering why, I looked back in time to the development of my own identity and the interactions I had with adoptees and street children in Asia. If research was not born out of a personal connection to a people and land, there was some exposure, some relation, that brought cultural anthropologists to approach those questions of why. To propose a question is to show that you are curious and are willing to demonstrate a desire to figure out what that 'why' is. I think that some of the most interesting stories lie in the voice of the anthropologist in the prologue or introduction of the ethnography, since it is in that opening that the reader understands the answer to the fieldworkers' why.

In the summer of 2004, I had the opportunity to work on an archaeological expedition in Mongolia with a team of researchers from the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History. Going to Mongolia fulfilled a dream to visit this country I have always been fascinated with. It was an opportunity that surely changed the course of my life, and continues to be a time that I always refer back to when explaining how I became interested in my academic research. Even though I do have a research focus on Siberia, seeing Mongolia helped me place a face to a name, so to speak. The effects of economic development on post-socialist states in this part of Eurasia are not totally different region to region. What I saw in Mongolia is what I anticipate to see some of in Khabarovsk.

Upon leaving the airport we had a short bus trip to our hotel. We arrived very late at night so it was very difficult to see Ulaanbaatar, except for the few glimpses of billboards and groups of teenagers walking along the street. The glow from the night-lights of Ulaanbaatar was not far off, yet my ideas of what this city would be like before arriving were a blur. I had no idea what to expect, and this was probably the very first time I had no mental picture of what this place would be like except for the black and white photographs in history books of the main square and the large statue of General Sukhbaatar, one of the country's revolutionary heroes. Of course, this blur only applied to the city, as my ideas about rural Mongolia seemed to hold true, with expansive grasslands, friendly people and hundreds of goat herds roaming the land. It was a truly romantic notion that I had of Mongolia, and once we did reach the

outskirts of the city, this image came into play and never took the smile off my face.

We arrived to our hotel after a quick ride through the city. Exhausted from flight, the cool breeze of a Mongolian summer night woke me up while I waited for our bags to be unloaded. While waiting, breathing in the air and getting a sense of where I was, I felt people moving around behind me. I turned around and was greeted by three young children holding up boxes of chewing gum, asking me to buy one. I started to look around for an adult, but nobody else besides us newcomers was in sight. Our translator for the trip told them to go away, as the children moved from one foreigner to the next seeking a customer. The children were brushed off, told to go away. They stood around watching us, and I them. After awhile they left as we walked into the hotel and unloaded our bags and gear.

The next morning, I got up early to look out the window and see this place in daylight, almost like a kid running downstairs to see what Santa left under the Christmas tree. The children from the night before were not in my thoughts as much now, as I was really, for the first time, seeing Ulaanbaatar. Construction projects, the Chinese embassy, a pink Soviet-looking university building, and in the distance, hills dotted with white *gers*. Hardly any people were walking along the streets and a few yellow taxi cabs sped by. The city does not move until late morning, and until then, all was quiet in Ulaanbaatar.

Our first full day in Ulaanbaatar was Mother and Child Day, the first of June. Walking through the city and seeing mothers dressed in their best attire with their children holding balloons was quite a festive occasion and to see happy families enjoying the day was a pleasant experience. There were many children around that day, and on the main square games, prizes and flowers adorned the massive space, presenting a playground of sorts for everyone celebrating the day. The children from the night before entered my mind: were they enjoying this nice day with their parents? Did they have parents to look after them?

Later in the day, and throughout the rest of our stay in Ulaanbaatar, children increasingly became the focus of my attention.

When walking across the square, through the streets, on the way to finding a restaurant, day or night, children would follow us asking for money, for food, for help. I did not know what to think, and I did not know how to ask about it. Most of the children were terribly skinny, wearing tarnished clothes, and speaking just enough English to converse with foreigners. Was it taboo to investigate why these children were living like this on the street? What do the Mongolians think about this? Where are the children living? Every sight of children following people desperately asking for food or money made me question why. It is not something you can ignore. It is constantly in front of you, and in some cases, it is something following you.

One evening, walking back from a restaurant with my advisor, we strolled through a small park. Older men gambled money and vodka, hunched over boxes with children hovering over them, watching. The men were more focused on the game than on the young children around them. The children chased down foreigners, including us, as we were passing by. During this particular walk, one boy, without a shirt, walked with us all the way back to our hotel, tugging our shirts and asking for money and food. He knew just enough English to ask us these things. I wanted to give him something, but was advised not to. The young boy gave up on us after awhile, stopped walking, and returned to where he first saw us. I felt uneasy and helpless myself. After a rather awkward silence, Bill told me it was a very depressing thing to see children living on the streets and that something needs to be done about it. I started to ask questions, none of which could be entirely answered. It was not known where the children come from, where they go and what could be done to help them. It was a sad fact that seemed to be overlooked, as if nothing could be done, a lost cause.

Our time in rural Mongolia was strikingly different than our stay in Ulaanbaatar. I noticed that the children had a certain freedom. Groups of very young boys and girls would travel to our campsite and watch us work at our sites. They brought us flowers in hopes of exchange for candy or perhaps a small souvenir. I was advised to bring such things as gifts for children, but had not realized it was meant for the children we would be seeing in the countryside until

they visited us. I did not carry the sweets or small toys with me in the city, and when I think back, if I had done this, what would have happened?

After leaving rural Mongolia and re-entering the city before our departure back to Washington D.C., I was bothered by the strong dichotomy of the treatment of children. In the city, children either had everything—a home, caring parents, an education—or nothing. In the rural districts, children did not have many material things, but they essentially had everything: a home, caring parents, and the freedom to move about at their own desire. With such a small city present in a very large country, it was surprising to see such drastic differences in children's lifestyles.

Our last night in Ulaanbaatar was as influential for me as the first one. Walking to a restaurant for a farewell dinner, we were approached by several children asking for food or money. I noticed that they had been hiding underneath stairwell cases, with one child standing in the sidewalk, acting as a sort of lookout. Passersby walking up and down the street seemed to disregard their presence, walking to their destination without bother by the children. They greeted us immediately, but the Mongolians with us told them to go away. Incidents like this one bothered me a great deal, but it always lead to the larger question of why? Why were these children seen as a nuisance? Was anyone watching out for their welfare?

Before we reached the restaurant, I noticed a very large green building of the Soviet style: a tower in the middle, columns, all painted green. A metal fence surrounded its perimeter, and a large statue of a man was standing in front of it. Banners adorned the sidewalls, and not having developed my reading skills in Cyrillic, I asked what this place was. I was told it was an orphanage. When I asked if it was still operating, I was given an uncertain answer. The empty space around it gave this institution a very isolated feeling. It was difficult to miss, but at the same time, it seemed to be an island in a sea of tourist shops, restaurants, and roaming street children asking for help. There was something haunting about this orphanage. Perhaps it was the fact that it looked hollow: there was no activity, no people walking in or out. The building appeared to be a remnant of the past, a building of grandeur struggling to keep

up with surrounding developments. I was not able to gather much information about this place, but I wish I had seen it earlier, not on my last day in Mongolia. Outside the restaurant, the orphanage stood, seemingly ignored as much as the street children grappling to survive.

The children of Mongolia left an enormous and powerful impression on me. I did not expect to see street children when I arrived, and by the time I was ready to leave, I felt I had witnessed something that could have a major effect on what I plan to research in the future. There seemed to be so many questions left unanswered. When thinking about the many children roaming the streets of Ulaanbaatar, with an ostensibly empty orphanage casting its shadow upon the helpless, I had to wonder, what was this institution like during the Soviet era? Was it a bustling place, full of children, nurses and teachers? If so, what happened after the fall of the Soviet Union? Why are there so many children living, working, and surviving in the street? What is the role of the orphanage as an institution today? It is from these questions that I became interested in the anthropology of state institutions and children.

When I think of the Russian Far East, my mind conjures up images of a unique mix of Russian and Asian culture. The topic of identity in an ethnically mixed environment intrigues me. I became particularly drawn to Khabarovsk, a city located along the Amur River, the main boundary separating Russia from China. Because this city is a gateway between both countries, it provides a chance to study cross-cultural interactions. Khabarovsk's ethnic diversity, with Russian, Chinese, Nanai, as well as Korean, Uzbek, and other Central Asian nationalities, made me wonder if children were viewed or treated differently in this city. In Mongolia, a majority of the children were ethnic Khalkh, Mongolian, but in the city's black market, several children were a mix of Russian or Caucasian and Mongolian. Are orphanages in Khabarovsk in the same condition as the one in Ulaanbaatar? Did the fall of the Soviet Union have greater effects on orphanages in Khabarovsk? Realizing I could ask the same questions that I had developed in Mongolia, I decided to research this problem further.

After an extensive search for anthropological literature on orphanages, I was surprised to find that hardly anything has been published on the subject. When doing internet searches however, I found that development, missionary, and aid work is being done in Khabarovsk for orphans and orphanages. There seems to be two institutions working side by side for the welfare of children: the orphanage and nongovernmental organizations.

In the summer of 2006 I was able to explore these questions by spending one month in Khabarovsk. I was able to connect with American missionaries who have been working in a small orphanage in the Far East city for over a decade. Unlike the large orphanage I saw in Ulaanbaatar, I was able to spend several days with a small village orphanage. After doing some research on Russian orphanages and reading reports about the overcrowded, dark and dismal institutions in which these children live, I was rather ashamed of myself to have these thoughts when we first visited this small, quaint and friendly building. Vegetable and fruit gardens, art projects, and a developing wood shop helped me look at this orphanage like a home. My short time at the orphanage was simply an introduction: I was able to play games with the orphans and go with them on their field trips to parks and river-boat tours, but to fully understand what it means to be an orphan in Russian society was something I would not be able to grasp during this trip. Issues of relatedness between orphans and Russian society are problematic. It was difficult to have fun with the orphans and realize that they are somehow hidden in this small orphanage outside of the city.

Overall, the impact that children have had on my travel experiences as well as my research pursuits have affected me deeply. So many problems in society have placed the future of these children in the streets or in institutions. It is something I will never be able to understand or comprehend. As a foreigner, it is difficult to personally relate to this; as a researcher, it is difficult to gain trust. However, in this case, by making strange faces or playing, knowing how to make a child smile seems to be the ultimate connection. This connection is a work in progress.



An American Woman in Cairo

KATHLEEN O'NEILL '06

I am an American. I am female. These are the first two issues to be raised in conversation when the topic of my living and studying in Egypt is raised. It seems that people want to hear that I am harassed constantly and that everyone is full of anti-American sentiments. This is not the case, and people almost sound disappointed when I tell them so. Harassment exists. I accept it; this does not mean that I like it, or provoke it.

I am a foreigner in a foreign land. I look like a foreigner with my pale skin that does not tan. This fact alone makes me stand out. It attracts attention from curious Cairenes who want to know where I am from and what I am doing in Cairo. They are also the ones who are quick to offer a "Welcome to Egypt."

I was told upon arrival that there were things you should keep in mind when navigating the streets. You should always walk head up with an authoritative step; always know where you are going, even when you don't; avoid making eye contact with passers by on the street. This becomes the mantra in your head. It is the advice that plays over and over again in your mind as you embark on your way to independence in Cairo. Following these suggestions does not make you immune, but it does reduce occurrences.

My apartment last semester was four blocks from campus. I lived on the fourth floor and would take the time on the way downstairs to prepare myself for the walk, making sure I was appropriately covered and mentally preparing myself. Most days I would arrive at school or back home with no problems. Occasionally, however, I would experience a bout of harassment that would dampen my positive impressions of Cairo. There were days when I would return back to the safety of my apartment after my classes and not want to go out again; to find safety and solace in a place that was my own.

I was not alone in this. My roommates and I used to swap stories of street antics, sharing in the anger and the amusement that would ironically go hand in hand. Despite the momentary desire to seclude oneself, the understanding that this was not the norm filled my thoughts. The next time I went out was not going to be the next time I was harassed. I knew that of all the days that I was in Cairo and of all the times I walked down the street, the number of times I was uncomfortable was insignificant.

I had never lived in a city before moving to Cairo. I grew up in rural New Jersey, only to move to rural Maryland for college. I have visited cities and spent time in cities, but never for this long. There are a thousand adjustments that have to be made when moving to a country where you do not speak the language or to a city the size of Cairo. Focusing on the insignificant and allowing it to overshadow the rest is doing a disservice to both you and the city.

There is a kind of personal liberation that happens when you venture out on your own to explore the city. I have found that the more I go out and the more I venture outside of my comfort zone, the more a part of the city I feel. I moved to a different part of the city for my second semester. While riding in a cab to campus the first week back, I was looking out the window and seeing Cairo not as a foreign city where harassment abounds, but as a place where I live, and of which I am a part.

The mantra no longer runs through my head every day as I prepare to embark on the city streets. I no longer find myself taking a deep breath in before walking out my door. I still find amusement in the behavior which is so far from acceptable in our own society

(although that fact alone does not prevent it from happening in our own cities) and am ever so tempted to make a comment in response, just to see the reaction (although reason makes me think otherwise, and stops me in my tracks). Despite the occasional comment, mostly in Arabic, and mostly above my understanding, I never feel threatened. I have more anxiety when I venture into New York City than I do traversing through Cairo.

You get out of Cairo as much as you put in. If you never venture out for fear of what may happen, and allow yourself to feel like a victim every time someone says something, you will never experience all there is to experience. I have made incredible friends and met wonderfully hospitable people, who are all too eager to welcome me into their home.

The Middle East is not full of fundamentalists who are only out to objectify and harass Western women. Nothing can be further from the truth. The people you meet here are the same as people you will meet anywhere. Most are just trying to get through the day, to earn a decent wage so they can provide for their families. Most days, religion does not even play into the equation.

It is the little things about Cairo that stick in my mind. Like the 50 Egyptian Pound note (a little less than \$10, American) that I found on the sidewalk during Ramadan, and which my Egyptian friend and I gave to a little boy standing nearby. The disbelief in his eyes that he should be lucky enough to be able to take home such a sum of money, made my heart melt. Or I think about my neighbors in my old apartment who would invite my roommates and me over for tea, and who knit each of us (eight in total) a wool scarf. I think about my roommate's tutor, a Moroccan, who upon hearing that I had studied in Morocco invited me to join them for dinner, when he had met me just that night.

As I spend more time here, and I have more interactions with people, it is the stories mentioned above that remain the most vivid in my memory. Meanwhile, the unpleasant anecdotes that derive from street interactions fade into distant memories. You get out what you put in, and an open mind and a willingness to explore is the starting point for any great adventure.

Contributors

ARTICLE AUTHORS

Brandon Righi '07 is a History major and Political Science minor at Washington College. Among his activities are serving as president of Phi Alpha Theta's Nu Phi chapter, Lit House Fellow, member of Omicron Delta Kappa and the Cater Society of Junior Fellows, and employee of the Washington College Boathouse. At Washington College Brandon has conducted historical research thanks to the generosity of the Society of Junior Fellows, the Comegys Bight Fellowship, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute. Post-graduation he is interested in studying Colonial American and Early Republic history.

Brenna Nan Schneider '06 developed a strong interest in international development while an International Studies major at Washington College. She studied abroad in Bodh Gaya, India where she was challenged both academically and personally by rural poverty. Last spring she returned to India with the support of a Douglass Cater Society of Junior Fellows grant to research the work of Indian development organizations. She was the recipient of the College's George Washington Medal in 2006. She currently works for the Iacocca Institute at Lehigh University, supporting its professional education programs and the Pennsylvania Governor's School for Global Entrepreneurship.

Kim Proctor '08 is a Political Science major with a minor in History. During her time at Washington College, she has concentrated on Latin American studies, and she attended the 49th Annual Air Force Academy Conference on "Latin America at a Crossroads."

She is particularly interested in gender issues and the social impact of militarism. She is a member of the Douglass Cater Society of Junior Fellows.

Brian Taylor '08 is a History major with a particular interest in Irish and American history and a minor in Political Science. During his time at Washington College, he has been a member of the Douglass Cater Society of Junior Fellows, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Phi Alpha Theta, and is a brother of the Kappa Alpha Order.

Gillian Bourassa '09 is a History major and is pursuing teaching certification in secondary social studies. Her areas of historical interest focus primarily on Medieval Europe and the Modern World, and she is looking forward to focusing her studies further in her remaining years at Washington College.

Junelle Wright '06 majored in International Studies and German and is currently a masters student in Peace Studies and International Politics at the University of Tuebingen in Tuebingen Germany. During her time at Washington College she studied abroad at the University of Tuebingen in Tuebingen, Germany, and Meiji Gakuin University in Tokyo, Japan. Junelle is particularly interested in issues of social justice and international conflict resolution. She is expected to finish her Masters Degree in summer 2008.

NOTES FROM ABROAD AUTHORS

Christina Granberg '03 holds an interdisciplinary degree in Design and Visual Communication, with a minor in Political Science. From 2003 to 2005 she worked in Swaziland, Southern Africa, contributing to health education and development efforts. She also collaborated in the design of a national communications campaign highlighting rural communities and their grassroots responses to HIV/AIDS. Her focus on health education, rural development, and documentary studies is largely due to independent research opportunities abroad made possible by the Douglass Cater Society

of Junior Fellows throughout her undergraduate study. Christina's current work involves human rights documentation and communications for a non-profit in Israel and the West Bank. She will return to school for her masters in Communication and International Development. Her interests include documentary photography, post-colonial theory, and honoring indigenous communities as sources of knowledge and appropriate development strategy.

David Snyder graduated from Washington College in 1992. After receiving his Master's Degree in Professional Writing from Towson University, David joined Baltimore-based Catholic Relief Services, and was stationed in Kenya and South Africa for seven years. David has traveled extensively, and now lives in Baltimore, where he works as an independent writer and photographer.

Andrea Kim Neighbors '05 majored in Anthropology with a focus in East Asia. During her stay at Washington College she studied abroad at the University of Oulu in Finland where she became interested in Arctic Studies. She participated in a summer archaeology internship in Mongolia with the Arctic Studies Center from the Smithsonian Institution. She is currently a Master's student in anthropology at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks studying orphanages in the Russian Far East and international adoption between Russia and the United States. Her general interests include the anthropological study of institutions, children, foreign aid, the Russian Far East, Central Asia, and the large, fascinating region that is the Arctic.

Kathleen O'Neill '06 received her degree in Economics and International Studies with a concentration in North Africa and the Middle East. Kathleen is currently a graduate student at the American University of Cairo in Cairo, Egypt where she is pursuing her Master's degree in Middle East Studies. Egypt is not her first time in North Africa; she also studied at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco while at Washington College.

C O L O P H O N

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Brandon Righi
Brenna Nan Schneider
Kim Proctor
Brian Taylor
Gillian Bourassa
Junelle Wright
Christina Granberg
David Snyder
Andrea Kim Neighbors
Kathleen O'Neill

